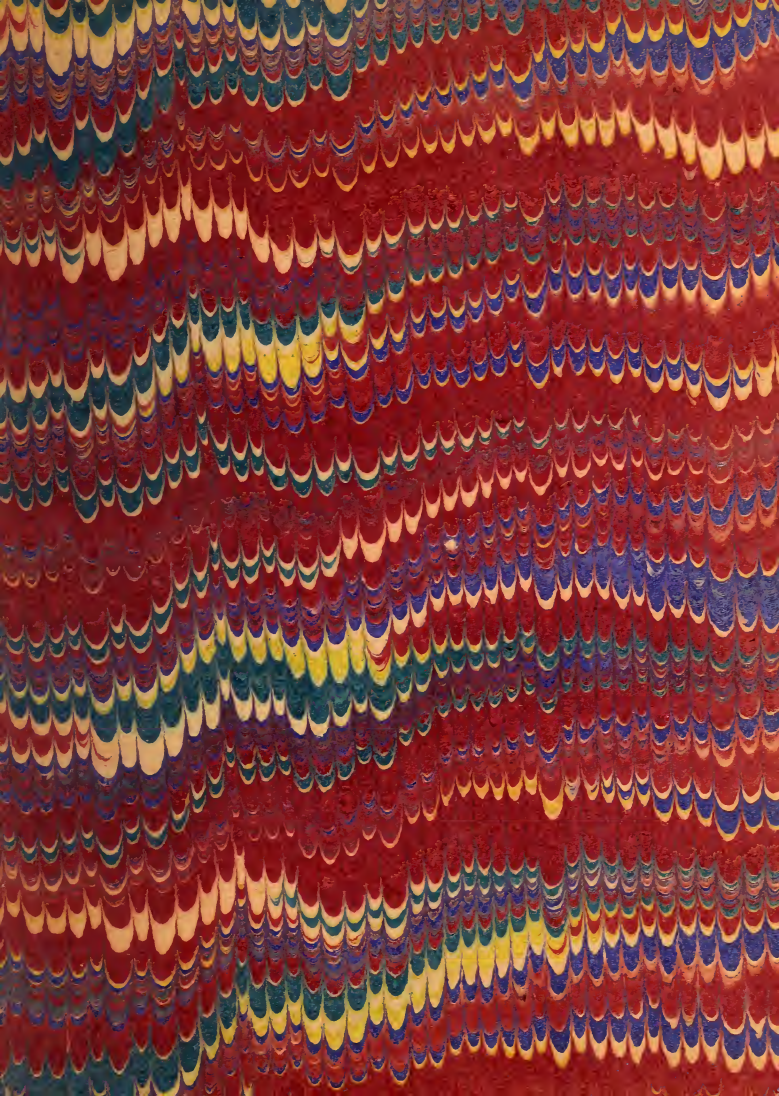
BT
703
.S3

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. ..... Copyright No. .....

Shelf BT703
.D3

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



MAN:

Present and Future.

MAN:

PRESENT AND FUTURE.

BY

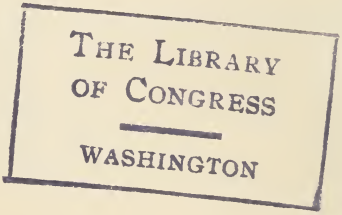
GEORGE SAFFORD.

64146 aw

UTICA, N. Y.
PRESS OF L. C. CHILDS & SON,
MDCCCXCVI.

BT703
S3

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1896, by
GEORGE SAFFORD,
In the office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington, D. C.



HR504

PREFACE.

From early youth the interest of the writer of these pages has been drawn to the scriptures as the only means of learning the will of God concerning the human race. While yet young in years, he has listened to the candid and earnest appeals of gospel ministers and popular revivalists, exhorting men everywhere to repent and seek safety in the blood and merits of Jesus Christ. He has heard the pathetic story of the cross told to sympathizing listeners, and seen the hardened and defiant sinner bow beneath the weight of his high-handed rebellion and the measureless Love of the Friend of *all*, accept the Free Gift and rejoice in his newly-found salvation.

He has heard in flaming eloquence the pictured agonies of the eternally lost in regions beyond the reach of Love and Mercy, offered in vivid coloring as incentive to repentance and reform.

He has read and heard wrangling and discordant dissertations on sectarian theses and scholastic theologies, which have from time to time been associated with, and incorporated into the plain and simple gospel of Christ.

The impressions received in those earlier times, have, in later years, developed into convictions that those disputed and contradictory tenets were not only valueless as articles of faith, but that they were never enjoined as such by the Author of our hope, and that inasmuch as they were sources of contention among Christians; were absolute hindrances to union, brotherhood and love in the church.

And now that he has reached his allotted three score and ten years, he deems it his mission and duty to offer, as presented in these pages, inducements to recourse "to the Law and to the testimony," that the seeker after the truth may learn whether these things be so.

There are no pretensions to scholarship

claimed; on the contrary, he feels that his want in that direction will be apparent on every page.

He has permitted himself to make use of conjectural and imaginative passages employed as vehicles to bring in prophecies or other scripture in support or illustration of his position.

Humbly hoping, therefore, that all literary defects may be generously overlooked and his honest effort honestly appreciated, and being fully convinced of the need of a better acquaintance with the Word of Life, he respectfully presents this little work for the consideration of possible readers.

GEORGE SAFFORD.

Canton, N. Y., April 12, 1895.

MAN: PRESENT AND FUTURE.

OBJECT IN MAN'S CREATION.

A Being lives and rules, some of whose attributes a finite creature may call by name, but, having named the few he knows, becomes lost in their immensity and confesses The Incomprehensible Creator. That finite creature may look abroad upon His works, and the moiety which he surveys confounds him. By the aid of science, distant worlds are placed within his view, and while the tears of an exalted reverence dim his vision, the light of a planet fixed in its place at its creation may have just reached him. And while the world extols the genius and greatness of that astronomer, he casts himself in the dust, beholds the Hand of the Omnipotent, and discovers his own littleness. But while, as a finite creature, he grieves that The Infinite has set bounds to the researches of science, his consolation comes.

"Insignificant as I now am," he cries, "the time will come when the vail will be lifted from these wonders, O God! and I shall comprehend the things that are now past finding out! Unsearchable as are Thy Purposes, and limited as is our knowledge, it shall transpire that this feeble earth-born being was created to fulfill a grand and a glorious destiny!" Made "a little lower than the angels," and in the image and likeness of his Maker, man by his disobedience, instead of continuing in that likeness and condition, descended in the scale, until in many cases he became like the lower order of animal life; and the effect of his disobedience and consequent continuous acts not in harmony with the laws of his being, or in concord with the expressed will of his Creator, mutilates the original likeness, widens the distance between man and his God and retards the progress of his determined destiny.

We shall accept as conclusive evidence of the object and intention of Divine purpose to make man the creature of His care, his Love, and the recipient of all of perfect happiness which his present or future capabilities will allow; the fact that such was his condition at his

creation, as related in the Scriptures ; the apparent fact of his progress in his present stage of being, and a Bible full of unmistakable promises of exalted conditions in the life to come.

The kindly hearted man, who, finding an orphan child in the street, shivering with cold and faint with hunger, took it to his own home ; warmed and fed it ; clothed and comforted it and gave it a place among his own children ; tolerated the waywardness which was the sure result of its former surroundings ; threw open the doors of education and progress and placed it within the reach of the mysteries of science and the benefits of christian teaching and example ; while he demonstrates the fact that charity is the crowning excellence of human attributes ; almost proves that God in his Infinite Love, purposes to act in reference to humanity, in an infinite degree, on the same loving and glorious plan.

The countless millions who have lived, do, and shall live upon this earth make up the Revelators "multitude whom no man can number." Whatever may have been, is, or may be their condition, we are forced to con-

cede that they were made according to God's Will and for His pleasure; and it is not to be supposed that His purpose in them could be fulfilled short of the highest possible happiness that their capabilities would permit.

Whatever the innate thirst for knowledge in natural or human science, for insight into the works of God and for immortality of existence in a state of eternal and perfect happiness, the present man possesses; when the fullness of the Father's time shall come, and the fullness of His number shall be complete; the race of Adam will be far more than gratified, and will ascribe Glory and Honor unto Him Whose loving object in man's creation was to make him a being on whom He could lavish all of knowledge, all of joy, and all of Infinite Love, that his eternally increasing capabilities could contain.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF MAN.

If the Darwinian theory of man's origin be the correct one, it is evident that his incipient stage or stages were fixed in pre-historic dates, or prior to the arrangement of this present form of our earth. The "let us make man in our own image and likeness" of Gen. 1:26, instead of forbidding the entertainment of such a theory, supposes its probability, and leaves ground for speculative consideration; the thought offering itself, that man had existed in gradual orders, and was at historic creation to be elevated in his being to the image and likeness of his Maker. Also, the fact that in all of man's future, he continually rises to higher planes of being; which analogy of future to past, may perhaps offer grounds for profitable hypothesis.

Placed then in as happy a condition as his state of being would admit, man became a candidate for all the free gifts and loving favors that an Almighty Father could confer. Representing the highest order of animal life,

with an intelligence competent to comprehend his responsibilities, the test of obedience was given him. We may, I think, safely aver that had Adam kept the command in that one instance, no further trials would have been given him. But alas, he disobeyed and ate the fruit of the proscribed tree, "whose mortal taste brought death into the world and all our woe." And ever since that disastrous hour man has suffered the dire consequences. Compelled to wear out his physical being to secure his natural sustenance, instead of being a little lower than the angels, he is condemned to a plane but little higher than the creatures over which he was given dominion. Compelled to reproduce his species after the manner of the brute creation; to "eat his bread in the sweat of his face" and assimilate his food like other animals. And, reader, as long as the Cherubims and flaming sword prevents access to the Tree of Life, such must be the condition of the children of men. He enters his existence with a wail; sickness and sorrow and sin are his companions until he reaches the physical zenith of his life; sickness and sorrow and sin follow

him through all his downward road till death points to his future and his past, and closes his present. Gloomy picture! Fearful results of disobedience and a violated accountability. "Adam, where art thou? Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?" and "what hast thou done?" given in the story of the fall, establish the fact of man's accountability beyond possible controversy. And yet added to this, his accountability to his fellow-creatures below and above him in the scale of social position, offers conclusive evidence of accountability to the Supreme Power.

All law is based upon accountability, and without either the other could not exist.

ACT AND EFFECT OF MAN'S DISOBEDIENCE.

Before entering on the topics of this subject it may be advisable to define the two words of our caption, Present and Future, as herein treated. The reader will please understand the term Present as involving all the time from Adam's earliest hour to the closing moments of this stage of man's existence; and Future to mean all we can know of things belonging to ages succeeding the first resurrection. Whether the garden of Eden, "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" and "The Tree of Life" are to be accepted in a literal sense, or, as figurative, may perhaps be left to conflicting decisions of opinion; but the writer from the fact of the literality of all the other trees mentioned with their specified uses as being planted for man's sustenance and gratification, is strongly inclined to the literal view. He also sees no other way in which Adam could have sinned, except through his appetite. The fact that *every tree in Eden*

was designed for man's unrestrained use, proves conclusively that both the forbidden tree and the tree of life were designed for his happiness; priority of the partaking being God's design in the proscription. To partake of the fruit of the tree of life *was not* prohibited; but, having disobeyed and sown thereby the consequent results of sin and death in himself and all successive progeny, these conditions through all ages of his future must necessarily be continued, unless frustrated by the interposition of the Creator. Observe the proof. "Now lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man, and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

The history of these acts, rendered in language suited to the comprehension of finite minds, manifest the "goodness and severity of God." Kept by divine interposition from making himself endlessly miserable, all the

children of men back to Adam, and forward through all the ceaseless ages of an eternal existence, may find a fitting theme whose harmonies shall ascribe loftiest praises to the Loving Father who stood between them and hopeless ruin.

Had man eaten of the tree of life instead of the forbidden one, the next visit his Maker made him would have held—what different purposes toward him! Instead of seeking him to curse him and His new creation for his sake, his greeting might have been: "Well done! I have come down to tell thee that thou hast secured to thyself and to the millions who shall owe their parentage to thee, my chiefest attribute, *Eternal Life!* Nothing can ever disturb thee or mar thy joy. All the happiness thy Maker can devise shall be thine. And I have come down to tell thee that the command wherewith I forbade thee to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which standeth in the midst of the garden, is become of none effect; and thou and Eve may add to your joy by freely partaking of its fruit. And I also tell thee that the moment the first morsel of the fruit of the tree of

life passed your lips a shout to which distant worlds responded went up from around the Throne of the Highest !"

But Adam and Eve's confession of disobedience and consequent sorrow for their fault could not cancel the sin or avert the consequences due. Not all the united philanthropy of earth could formulate a scheme to place man beyond the reach of sin and death. Plato, in his broad love for his fellow man, could only give grand and noble rules of life, and offer him as palliation, the theory of the immortality of the human soul. Who lives, or has lived, but has seen his brightest earthly hopes laid in the dust ! How many have tasted and are still tasting the bitter fruits of disobedience ! Who has not watched with heart-breaking sorrow the failing health and wasting strength of father, mother, brother, sister, or other loved one, in their slow and sure and weary journey to the grave ! And, darkest picture of all, how many have "sorrowed as those without hope !"

O fearful effect of transgression ! And direful as it is, sin still follows sin, and will still abide until the fullness of God's time shall

come, and almighty power and limitless love stands between man and the effect of his disobedience.

The writer believes the number of those who will enter upon eternity under existing conditions of man's life will be far greater than it would have been had sin not changed his relations to his Maker. It was plainly intended by the Creator that reproduction of his species should be on a far lower scale in point of numbers. "I will greatly multiply thy sorrows and thy conception," sufficiently evidences this fact. Had man not disobeyed, his progeny would most certainly have survived, and surviving, would not by millions have equalled the vast increase of the race under present conditions.

When the fullness of God's time shall have come, and the fullness of His "multitude whom no man can number" shall be accomplished; when "unto Him shall the gathering of the people be;" we shall be satisfied with the incomputable number, and God,—as when man came from the hands of his Maker,—will pronounce them "good."

But—the way—the means—the plan employed to bring about this great revolution in the condition of the human race. This way has been scoffed at and sneered at in most by men who have taken the conclusions of sectarians as exponents of the Word of God. Different commentators have given different renderings very much at war with each other, and without seeking for themselves, accept for fact that church dogmas and academic theologies represent Revelation, and are to be taken as the teachings of the Bible.

The plain and unqualified declarations of John 14:6 harmonizes with prophecy, with the mundane life of Jesus Christ and with the faith of the church's millions. It is also in harmony with, and sufficient for the needs of man: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life! No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me!"

It has seemed to some "a small thing" that the partaking of the fruit of one of the trees of Eden should produce so great disaster to the human family; and the act has been pronounced as not commensurate with results. The fact that those results are before us is beyond the need of evidence; while the removal

of them becomes the paramount concern of the children of men, and has employed the Wisdom and Love of their Creator. Let us here consider the relations between man and man by way of analogy. We have seen—ever since a third person existed—all the way down from Cain's protest, the uses of mediation and advocacy in reconciling man to his brother man, and we accept mediatorial offices as indispensable in the economy of life. What better system, what more perfect plan, in short what other WAY so fitting as the one adopted by the All Father—the scheme of the mediation and advocacy of a Being qualified by His high position, by His voluntary sacrifice of life, to accomplish the restoration back to the limitless favor from which the creature had fallen?

Man's absorbing business in this world should be to gain through obedience in Christ what he lost by disobedience in Adam; the right of access to the *Tree of Life*.

At a time when an ambitious and an idolatrous nation held the supremacy of the world; when Jerusalem and all the children of Jacob chafed beneath the shameful yoke of heathen

bondage, and searched amid the mazes of prophecy for the Promise of the Messiah to appear and interpose in their behalf, to break the shackles of their servitude and establish the kingdom guaranteed to Israel through the Abrahamic covenant; immense crowds nearly depopulated Jerusalem and the villages of Judea; and with interested eagerness pressed onward to the wilds of Jordan, where a strange and earnest preacher was exhorting the vast concourse to "repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven" was "at hand." The children of Israel were elated with and believed in the fact that this same John the Baptist was the one foretold by prophecy, who should prepare the way of Shiloh. Few dissenting voices were heard, and many were "baptized in Jordan confessing their sins." To what a height of hopeful joy must their expectations have risen, when in sight of all, and in hearing of all, Heaven gave its testimony to the advent and presence of the anointed Prince!

But the inclinations of the Rabbins to manufacture theologies, a proclivity peculiar to Jewish doctors of the law, had, long prior to this era, rendered the promises of God to

Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, which promises were reiterated by the mouth of the prophets, of "none effect." We may, I think, safely entertain the belief that the many secular reverses and captivities of the chosen people were the principal cause of this wrong rendering of the condition of the Messiahship; desirous as they certainly would be for the coming of a prince who would lead their armies to certain victory, and reign the sole ruler of the world.

To the Jews were especially committed the keeping of the covenants, the law and the prophecies, and all of the then revealed will of God to mankind. And to them belongs the act of throwing wide the doors of license to clerical perversions, man-made theologies, absurd and false systems, ridiculous traditions and legendary monstrosities; themselves wresting the most important feature of Divine Revelation to an extent which no Bible student will concede it can bear.

The eyes of all Jerusalem were fixed upon every move and action of the lowly and pure-minded stranger who walked its streets, who spoke in its temple, who read and expounded

the law in the synagogues, who rendered the beautiful prophecies and threw floods of light on their sublime and poetic figures, who silenced the disputations of the doctors, who gave health to the sick, hearing to the deaf, sight to the blind, and who re-animated and restored the dead.

But instead of the scepter and an invincible army, behold a staff and a handful of poor and obscure fishermen. Instead of a chariot of burnished gold and a throne of priceless gems, behold a weary traveller making His progress on foot, the earth serving for His throne and His pillow.

"He came to His own and His own received Him not," because He came not in accordance with outraged prophecy.

Reader, search carefully the scriptures and you will be abundantly convinced that the coming of the Messiah in the pomp and glory foretold of Him, could *never*, *never* have occurred in this present stage of earth. He came as the WAY. I counsel you to accept of His TRUTH that you may enter into His LIFE.

Let us suppose, by way of illustration, that it became the business of mankind to devise a

way whereby the present human race might become reconciled to an universal potentate, against whom every person had rebelled and had defied, and of whom many who were farthest from him proclaimed that there was no such king; that he was a myth, and existed only in the low and unworthy idea of reverence for an imaginary superior being. Suppose that in their local convention the people elected the best and the wisest as delegates to a congress which should be empowered to formulate a scheme by which every one concerned might be eligible to be partakers in its advantages. Suppose, as the result of mature and earnest deliberation, they had fallen on and acquiesced in a plan like the following: "A person shall be sought out—pure-minded and sinless as an infant, gifted with the highest order of intelligence; whose holy and blameless life, whose lofty example and pure precept attracts our respect and inspires our love; whose power over human infirmities joined to a God-like presence extorts from the world the admission that he bears the nearest relationship to the King. Let this personage secure a train of followers, humble in heart and as nearly like Adam in the

hour of his creation as may be; for, in such a world of wickedness, we believe such to be his most befitting company. We propose that he leave his paternal abode and without home or possessions wander from place to place fulfilling the work most in accord with the righteous King's pleasure; bearing patiently the scoffs and jeers of a hardened and rebellious race, and the hatred and persecution of a jealous and vindictive priesthood. We design further, that he make his appearance at the city of Jerusalem, that place being at once the greatest seat of hypocrisy and the true service of the King upon earth, and the resort of people from all nations. He shall perfectly understand his mission and the manner in which his enemies shall deal with him, and the entire purpose for which he labors. And that he may the more effectually "draw all men unto him" he shall voluntarily yield up a pure and perfect life by being "lifted up" and crucified upon a Roman cross on Calvary, a mountain near Jerusalem, whereon the conquerors of the Jews executed the sentence of death upon malefactors."

How perfectly satisfied would a world whose welfare was involved in such issues express

itself. What millions of treasure have been expended in monuments to the memory of those who have given their lives for their country's sake. We think on war, and tears flow for its dead, and we hold them in veneration. But in the Divine economy but one sacrifice was deemed necessary for the reconciliation of a world. Important and valuable as is every human being that has lived, lives, or shall live, the death of the humanity of *one* was accepted as an equivalent.

God did not send forth His mandate ordering the execution of the ringleaders in this uncalled for and wicked rebellion; *no*, *not one* was destined to suffer more than the just and decreed penalty of his disobedience.

The sins, the sufferings and death of a "multitude whom no man can number" were laid upon that *one;* and every sin, and every suffering and every death shall, in God's eternal and sinless future, give place to their extremest opposites. Mankind are wholly human, wholly finite; they have only reached a higher standard of being than that attained in ages prior to our present. Therefore the Creator deals with us as such. His revelation

to us is clothed in language that we, as finite creatures, can easily comprehend. In no manner or place does He call upon us to endeavor to solve the mysteries of infinity.

When the Master's closest friend was favored with a vision of the "Holy City, New Jerusalem," he was obliged to describe its radiant glory by comparisons with finite and perishable baubles of earth; "gold" and precious stones and "clear glass" John knew in that day, and we believe at this day that all the shining gems to which he compared the glories he beheld would have been lusterless had they formed any part of any belongings to his beatific view. Accordingly, in revealing the Way, a language and a plan were employed commensurate with the intelligence and ability of the creature to be benefited. God sends us one who, by His perfection of character, wins our admiration; who, by His teaching and His works, draws us among the multitude to hear Him; the manner of whose life and death touches our sympathies, and if we can but feel that His mission was to us, and that His life was sacrificed for us *personally*, we bow at His feet, deplore the disobe-

dience that rendered so great an effort in our behalf necessary, avow our faith in Him and are forgiven and accepted by Him.

The disciples of Jesus were unlearned, susceptible and pure-minded men ; unbiased only by the false rendering of the Jewish fathers concerning the advent of the Messiah, and although in constant hearing of the Master's teachings, they appear to have carried their erroneous opinions down to His resurrection from the dead. We find no strenuous effort made by Him to correct their belief in regard to this, and He seemed perfectly satisfied with their entirely trustful faith. They believed on Him and that was, as now, all-sufficient. That was the burden of His great and loving mission, and it tells us that no other theologies are indispensible, or necessary to the salvation of the children of men, but "CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED !"

He requires that His followers disregard the "vain traditions of men" and put on the simplicity of Adamic innocence, or, as rendered in His own words, they should become the "little child" of Matt. 18:4 ; such condition being the only door of entrance to the

Kingdom of God. How poor, how weak and how more than valueless then the lofty and labored and ingenious theologies of the sectarian scholiast, which from of old have only served to "darken counsel by words without knowledge."

One glorious ray, however, pierces the dark shadows they have erringly thrown over the fair tracery of the beautiful and simple Gospel. They have themselves without doubt been in that child-like state required; have confessed the Master, and the Master has confessed them; and the fruits of their assiduous and scholarly researches have been borne in the love and fear of God, and with the fervent desire of furthering His Glory.

Let us present a few of those discrepancies which go to make up the religious tenets of to-day; nearly all denominations of Christians basing their faith on "Christ and Him Crucified."

You are called upon to believe, as the result of profoundest study and research, that God in long-passed ages elected and predestined the righteous to their future bliss, and the wicked to their doom. Another offers you the free-

dom of your agency, and counsels you to make a wise choice.

One declares it to be the determined will of the Father to save through the merits of the Son, every one made in His image, and to confer upon them an eternity of perfect happiness.

Another teaches that Divine Justice can never, throughout all the vast ages of the eternal state, be satisfied; that they must suffer, as long as God exists, in most intense torture, and that in sight of the redeemed.

One proves by chapter and verse, that if you, penitent at the foot of the cross, accept the pardoning mercy of "the lifted up," Christ will be formed in you a sure hope of salvation, and He "will be in you a well of water, springing up unto Everlasting Life," and that you will be His when He makes up His jewels, and that none shall pluck you out of the loving hand. Another founds the belief on the same Bible, that if, after you secure the best interest in the Blood of the Atonement which your penitence and surrender, by the grace of Christ entitle you, you yield yourselves under the wiles of Satan or the snares of the world to

temptation, your acceptance will be cancelled, and you will be as hopelessly lost as when the Holy Spirit first whispered you to seek the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness.

One insists that God will destroy with one fell stroke every child of Adam who remains impenitent until death blots out his Present, leaving not one alive who made not his calling and election sure in his earthly life.

Another declares that this latter, together with many others relating to destiny, is but the lamentable outcome of the efforts of finite minds to follow the counsels of the infinite through the gates of infinity. And so on, and on, through all the labyrinthian mazes of conflicting dogmas, until the wearied and perplexed hearer despairs of the truth, and is on the fearful verge of arraigning the Bible as a collection of contradictory doctrines. O ye, who formed by the capable hand of the maker of all the wonderful works you behold day by day, by that loving being who *created you for the express purpose of having innumerable objects on which to lavish His limitless love*, by one who is abundantly able to carry out His grand designs concerning you; do you

deem it of little or of no consequence that you daily and hourly refuse his ready overtures? What harm will it do you if you should submit to His rule, follow his precepts and abide in His love? And in connection with this question, What harm will it do you *if you will not?*

Will you not yield your own judgment as regards your own value, that uncounted wealth vested in you in favor of Almighty discernment and competent ability to raise you to priceless worth? Do you realize that this WAY, if you will walk in it in this present, will give you a passport into a blissful kingdom at the *first* resurrection? Do you, will you candidly consider the thought that if you forsake your sins and avail yourselves of the cleansing blood, the master will, at the close of your present, hide your lives with Himself in God? Will you reflect that *you are acting an ingratitude that outrages the coarsest sentiment of the very vilest?*

By the father's design toward you in your creation; by His ownership of you in that creation; by His willingness to make you more peculiarly His own by the spirit of adop-

tion; by His long-suffering and a patience that only an infinite God could manifest; by all who have joyfully given up their Present and are now resting in the hope of a brighter and a happier Future; by those multitudes who have lived out their priceless Present without a hope in Christ or even a passing interest in His death; by that august and celestial council which framed the wonderful plan of human restoration; *by the sacrifice* which that council deemed effectual; by the privations and deprivations of the Man of Sorrows in His earthly life and his voluntary assumption of our ingratitude, our rebellion and our sins, and, at last a most cruel and shameful death, thereby making manifest the height and depth of the love He bore you; by the rapt joy that heralds the repentance of a sinner around the Throne of the Highest; by all the here nameless inducements that are lovingly and faithfully held out to you; I counsel you, I beseech you, I importune you, I implore you to "return! Come!" and set your devious feet in the "WAY!"

Rome, ever ready to accord honor or praise where honor or praise was due, had watched with a curiosity closely allied to interest, the thrilling and wonderful details belonging to the life and death of the marvelous Being who called himself the Son of Man. The soldiery of Rome had been quartered in Judea during every event of the mission of our Savior, and as the, to them, peculiar religion of the Jews had already attracted deep research; none knew better than the scholars of Italy and Greece that in the person of Jesus of Nazareth the Hebrew prophecies were abundantly fulfilled, and on account of the palpably false renderings of their own sacred writings by the Hebrew Rabbins and the savage and murderous hatred of their priesthood, Rome was already leaning toward Christianity.

The conversion to the new faith of the bitterest persecutor of the followers of the great Sacrifice to the altar of Atonement, and the

grand line of circumstances that befel the apostle of the Gentiles, took the most profound reasoner of his age from the seat of the worship of the true God to the throne of Roman supremacy ; and there, from at once his home, his prison and his chapel, his strong faith, his eloquent and irresistible argument and his vast learning in the mysteries of the religion of God and of pagan mythology, brought the Mistress of the World to *kiss the Cross* whereon she had hung the Hope of the World in the blindness of her enlightened heathenism.

But Rome carried with her into the Church the secular sword of conquest and proposed, because she ruled in temporal, to rule also in spiritual things.

In order to make the Church of Christ uniform and catholic, a system of rules and observances were enjoined by virtue of her assumed supremacy, and gathering the fruits of Paul's labor elsewhere, and also those of the other apostles, the Bride, the Lamb's Wife—all save a few Ebionites and a few outspoken and independent among the Israelites became the Church of Rome.

Finding in after years that the many dogmas and rules of faith belonging to the universal church were promulgated and enjoined without—in the opinion of those who desired to reform what they considered abuses—sufficient warrant in the original Gospel of Christ, reform was deemed necessary. Those who undertook this reformation were fruitful in theses and dogmas and doctrines, and as many sects have arisen as the many renderings of the Word of Life could possibly permit.

But to go back to the earlier worshippers of God.

Certain acts of obedience were required of all who acknowledged the one true God as the ruler of the family of man and as their Deity. The object of such obedience was to make the separation apparent between the worshippers of the true God and those who served idols; to cause His votary to feel assurance of his acceptance, and to let the light of his righteousness shine upon his fellow beings, thereby drawing them into the paths of truth, and aiding them to reap the unspeakable rewards of Walking in the Way. It is very clear that

the earlier sacrifices and offerings of the people of God were not in obedience to divine command, but were purely voluntary on the part of the votary. When the Preacher of Righteousness came forth from the ark and looked abroad upon the silence and desolation that brooded over the earth and reflected that himself and his family were the only human beings living, his sense of gratitude for his great deliverance impelled him to build "an altar unto the Lord" and offer a sacrifice thereon.

Upon God's promise to Abraham to give the land of Canaan to his seed, his impulse was to "build an altar unto the Lord." On his arrival at Beth-el, or between that place and Hai, he also built an altar. Again, in the plains of Mamre, after the separation of Lot from him, and on the renewal of the Promise, he built another altar. The next altar of which we read, was built to demonstrate the faith and obedience of Abraham and to shadow forth the *Way*, in which all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

This appears to be the *first* sacrifice that God ordained, and it is notable that it was so

very like the one in which the Only Son truly became the victim. The *last* one! It is desired only to bring to notice the fact that the sacrifice belonging to the Mosaic dispensation, *was not*, until many years practiced, an ordinance by the command of God. He accepted their offerings in the spirit of worship, and not until men had signified their preference for that form of thanksgiving or invocation or covenant ratification, did He ordain it.

But the entire law of sacrificial atonement given through Moses to the children of Israel, had in its every letter the sublime principles involved in God's promise to Abraham; faith in the faithful covenant; keeping in view the sacrifice, only efficacious, and only acceptable, in which the hand of the slayer should not be stayed, no substitution made; but the blood of the chosen victim should be shed. This, while it in some manner answers the cavils of skepticism in relation to the uses and efficacy of the blood of the creatures sacrificed, offers us perhaps the true reason why, in language within the comprehension of men, and to keep alive a remembrance and a reverence for the aith of Abraham; Jesus Christ is so often

f

called, in connection with His death: The Son of God.

When in process of time, the children of Israel had lived long enough to make themselves a history, when the inspired prophets had foretold the final gathering and "restitution of all things," and the humiliation and death of the final sacrifice, and when the sacred traditions of the chosen people were recorded in books; then it was that the learned, as at this day, desirous of a share in common with "Holy Men of Old," began to wrest the simple theology of the scriptures by denying the Messiah in the plainly foretold form of a sacrifice, and accepting Him only as King. They drew from the prophecies nothing but the pageantry; while they discarded the symbol in God's command to the "Father of the Faithful," and therefore rendered the worship by oblation and sacrifice, an "abomination unto the Lord."

This is how "He came to His own, and His own received Him not." This is how Isaiah's "people had gone astray"; had every one "turned to his own way" and bound heavier to the shoulders of the "Man of sorrows, the

iniquities of us all." This is how they ceased to walk in the Way, and how Christ, instead of being "formed within them the Hope of glory," became a "stumbling-stone and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel."

And for this cause, because *God hath not "cast off His people*," the prophets foretell "a high way and a way" in the which their folly can not lead them into error; *and will*, as promised to Abraham, *lead them back to the shelter of the covenant; but not in this Present.*

It is an established principle that the acts of men, through their own agency, necessitates a change in the Creator's dealings with them.

Had the ancient Rabbins staid their hand from casting the black pall of unbelief and disobedience over their own and succeeding generations by their arbitrary and sacrilegious mutilation of the plain and literal Scriptures, by their false rendering of the Abrahamic Promise—the highest and noblest theme of the prophets—the children of Israel, doubtless, would be to-day a Christian nation. They would have been alert with hope and a consciousness of the fulfillment of the proph-

ecies of the Messiah given in their sacred books. When they saw the Babe in the Manger at Bethlehem, they would have ran wild with holy joy to meet one another with the faithful words of Philip in their mouths: "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph!" At the times when but a child He manifested a perfect knowledge of the law and the prophets, they would have shouted aloud from the housetops and in the streets, and in their sacred temple, behold the prophet, whom the Lord our God hath raised up like unto Moses; Him will we hear in all things! Instead of being disappointed and cast down because He drove not out the Romans and took possession of the kingdom with all the appointments of royalty, they could have said to them, "Behold your King!" "Yet a little while and the sword of His spirit shall conquer and bring you to His feet" in loving subjection.

The incalculable influence of the only people who daily read the revealed will of God concerning them would, without doubt, have "cut the work short in righteousness," made

the heathen His inheritance, and fulfill the dear words: "Thy Kingdom Come." O fearful results of perverting the word of Life! O House of Israel! Children of Calamity! the despised gentiles and the worst characters among mankind "go into the Kingdom of God before you!" Unfortunate people! Ye will not enter into the kingdom yourselves, and ye persevere in hindering others. Now must ye wait and "look for another," until God' shighway shall be cast up, until He shall take away your rebellious agency, and you with the nations whither ye are driven, shall bow the knee and look upon and confess whom ye have "denied," and whom ye "have pierced."

Question: What would be, or would have been, the result had the Jews left the letter and spirit of prophecy where they found it?

For the prophets, clean down to the last who foretold the Messiah fully knew, and fully believed the words put into their mouths by the spirit of God; and fully understood, that, during the ages while sin reigned, no kingdom could be established in the pomp and glory in which they described the literal reign of the Sovereign of the world.

"Children of the Promise, your house is left unto you desolate." Ye have no abiding place ; ye are pilgrims and strangers among the nations whither ye are driven. Many of you have lost your identity and your religion, and those who have not, are still teaching and accepting "for doctrine the commandments of men." Why will you not let "the time past suffice" for rebellion and stubbornness, and allow Him at this late day to "gather you under His wings. Then and *never* till then can you hold any right to expect the reign of the Christ in the glory of His Father as predicted by your prophets. He must be accepted by you in His humiliation and according to the terms of the covenant with your fathers, before He can accept you, or make you sharers in the blessings of the restitution.

O would you turn your eyes back to Calvary and read Pilate's inscription, whether prophetic I may not say ; placed above the thorn-crowned head of *your best friend and only hope*, and after your long and dreary waiting, confess *Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews*.

"Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for

the *old paths*, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

But God be praised, that, although the Jewish Rabbins did violence to the covenant of grace, and to the letter and spirit of prophecy, the full and comprehensive text remains to us, wherein the "strait gate" and the "narrow way" leads through all the perversions, all the wrestings and all the traditions and legends of early ages, and all the sectarian doctrines of later days, by well-defined and clear way-marks, to eternal rest.

And God be praised, that notwithstanding the multitude of theological opinions held in sectarian branches of the Christian church, the basis of our faith is Christ and Him crucified, and that we are firm and unshaken in the belief that there is "none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."

The time has been when bickering and strife and rancor, and if we look back to the earlier days of the church, we shall find that even *death* has been the result of theological differences.

But sectarian opinions wax less and less in value, and when the day comes when man-made and clerical theologies are taken at their true worth, they will be of no more importance to the followers of our Divine Master than they are accounted of by Him. The writer fully believes that all true Christians, of whatever name, are Walking in the Way that leads to *one Church;* and onward through that Church in the *way that leads to a glorious and a blissful future.*

Christian, let us cast away what remains of these foolish differences ; let the light radiating from the Prince of Light illumine the priceless truth of revelation, and let us pray that it may guide us while *Walking in the Way.*

DESTINY OF MAN'S PRESENT.

Destiny, as applied to man in this life, involves all that befalls him from the moment when his nostrils received the breath of existence on through all his days on this earth, and into his eternal future, where, could we trace him, we should find that he had not yet reached, even after the lapse of infinite ages, the high plane of being designed by his Creator. We have seen that the attribute of a limited agency was given to man at his creation, and how he abused that gift and incurred the conditions of accountability, involving sin to the extent that no act on his part could remove the results of disobedience.

From that moment the Word becomes of the utmost interest to man, for it points him to the open way in which his reconciliation may be effected. The necessity for the preparation of this way was made by man, but helpless in his situation, God furnishes the means of his restoration and only asks that he accept. If he does, he becomes bound to,

and inseparable from, the high destiny decreed for him, and is also the recipient of a sure hope to cheer him in the Way.

And permit me here to say to you that no act of man—no amount of rebellion or transgression ; not all his pride, all his high-handed wickedness, all his contempt for the overtures of His grace shall thwart God's great design in the grand destiny of the human race. Man disobeys the Divine Law and he suffers the loss of the joys and consolations his obedience would have secured to him, and the climax of the curse pronounced in Adam, and *nothing more*. He disobeys the fixed laws of his own natural being, and suffers in common with all flesh, the pending consequences, which often culminate in death. He has the Present given to him to fix, by the freedom of choice, his own destiny as relates to the next stage of his existence, or, the first plane of the Future ; and as he elects, so in that stage will be his destiny. If he chooses wisely, he will give up his Present with an assurance that he will have a "*part in the First Resurrection.*"

If he persist in his refusal of Divine conditions, he must descend to his grave to remain

holden of Death until raised to stand face to face with a just Judge, and receive such recompense as accords with the *Will of God.* He Who only can restore man's lost destiny has made His terms easy, as easy as for us to confess our fault to an injured neighbor

He stood and cried aloud among the people He was laboring and suffering and dying to restore to the favor of His Father: "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you Rest! Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find Rest unto your souls! For My yoke is easy and my Burden is Light!"

Come then! Come all! and Come Now!

The history of ages of rebellion, of stubbornness, of want of even common gratitude, and perseverance in the ways of sin, is open before you in most vivid contrast; and you are counselled to make the choice that will re-unite you to an unspeakably Glorious Destiny.

LIFE.

Adam at his creation "was made a living soul," and the principle of life belonging to him is dependent upon Revelation for its definition. We are told there that God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," and that he, the whole man, became a living soul, in the singular. No intention of conveying any idea of a duplicate being apparent in the text. Man's candidacy, according to Scripture, was subjected to a test of obedience, and we are plainly told in Genesis that he forfeited all right to immortality, which would seem impossible had man possessed in his being an innate endless existence.

It is furthermore a Bible fact that the means ordained by the Creator to confer eternal life was forcibly kept from him, and that for the very reason of its existing object.

Our argument, then, founded upon the above weighty premises, successfully disputes the Rabbinnical, and also the Platonic doctrine of the immortality of the human soul.

For us we believe with St. Paul, that "God only hath immortality." That the attribute *was not* inherent or secured in Adam, and can only be gained in Christ.

Shall we say that this crude being, whose appetites, whose passions and whose general natures are in common with the animals beneath us, can lay valid claims to the chief attribute of the living God? Think you that an immortal entity could inhabit this miserable, sin-scarred being, and hold no more potent influence over it?

Who, of all the countless millions that have lived prior to this generation, save Enoch, Moses, Elijah and Jesus Christ, are alive today? Enoch, who walked in the way with his God, and truthful, pure-minded and righteous Elijah, have never been one moment under the dominion of death, and Moses and the "Prophet like unto" him, whom Moses foreshadowed in his own death and resurrection, suffered the extreme penalty of the curse. God buried the one, and the other "made His grave with the rich in his death." God sent for the body of the one, and the king of terrors *could not hold the other? No, the other*

is "He that liveth and was dead! and behold!" He is "alive forevermore. Amen! And hath the keys of hell and of death!"

My friend, I am *glad* those keys are there. Do you not think it *best* to place your interests, your hopes, your *Life* in the Conquering Hand that holds those keys?

On that death and on that resurrection depends our life, the assurance of which is *all* that pertains to our present. We shall go down to the grave, and we shall lie longer there than He did; but if He hides our life with Himself in God, through our obedience, those keys will unlock our prison-house, and we shall again live in His Life. For He is the resurrection and the Life.

Pardon me, reader, if I find it difficult to keep to the things that pertain to the present, for these are delectable mountains, and although we are a part of the present you can point me to the joy and the beauty, and the glory that seem to beckon to us from across the intervening valley. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first ressurrection."

The life of man in his present, is still like Adam's, in candidacy. "*This do*" from

Genesis to Revelation is the condition of life.

The burden that the Friend of man would lay upon us is light. He desires us to consider our ways and to place our feet in better paths. He gives us a great deal for a very little, and the crowning gift is *Eternal Life*. Although error in regard to conflicting religious tenets may not stand in the way of anyone's salvation or even cloud the enjoyment of their hope, it nevertheless has its evil effects. He who teaches that man possesses an innate life, co-existent with his Maker, conflicts with the Word from which he draws his spiritual sustenance. He places the convert to that theory in a position to set a lighter value upon the Bible doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. This is a very old error, and is held to with great tenacity. If the student of Bible theology will hold as valueless the dogmas and tenets of men, and will rest alone on the Word of God, he will surely discard the error and find himself in harmony with the truth. How very strange that, if there be an intelligent soul, not dependent on the body for its life, with fullest capacities for enjoyment or suffering, so much importance is attached to the burial of the body.

No place is assigned in Scripture to the patriarchs but the *grave*. The particulars of their last hours and their interment are told in feeling and solemn language, but there is no final home intimated but the dark, cold and quiet house which they inherited from Adam. They died and "were gathered to their fathers," is the utmost limits to which the Bible carries them with reference to a continuance of life. Yes, they died; and all of life died with them except the hope in the Abrahamic promise, seeing "afar off" the resurrection of the dead and the kingdom established before the "foundation of the world." In the Promise to the Woman, the Promise to Abraham, the Song of the Prophets, the burden of the mission of Jesus Christ, the burden of the unanswerable arguments of the Apostles of the Gospel, and the imagery of the beatific vision of the beloved disciple, not one shadow of a hint is given, even to the ancient heirs of the Promise, that they possessed a principle of innate life that would ascend to the throne of God at the moment their Present closed. It seems a presumptuous idea that, in an instant of time, the principal part of this dupli-

cate being should be ushered into the august presence of uncreated and sinless spirits and their Infinite Head, from whom Adam, with but *one sin*, hid himself, when that soul which had been joined to the part formed from the dust of the earth, had been the prime mover, the framer and leader in all the sins committed by the creature while living out his Present. Join to this the total silence of Revelation regarding any innate immortality of man, and, above all, the express declaration of the Bible in the history of his conditions of material being at his creation, to the effect that any hypothesis in respect to continuance of life beyond the few days allotted in this Present is absolutely without support. And this ought to be, and is, abundant evidence of the total mortality of man. He was of the earth, earthy.

To the Jewish Rabbins are accorded the doubtful credit of giving to the world the doctrine of the immortality of the human soul. At what period it was first promulgated is not known; and its total want of authority in the Pentateuch and the books of the prophets, offers the opinion that it was an offspring of

their fertility in theologies, blended, perhaps, with a superstitious credence in posthumous apparitions.

Reader, you are advised to suppose for a time that the Bible doctrine of Life *does not* certainly teach an innate immortality, carried over and beyond the grave into the presence of God and the "more than twelve legions of angels;" and take up the subject upon its own bare merits, unbiassed by human commentary. Permit me to premise your results. You will find it to have been the one great object of the Creator, to plan for the creation of millions of intelligent beings for the sole purpose of making them *supremely and endlessly happy*.

You will find that in the curse of the two progenitors of all the children of men, it was decreed that they should return to the primitive element from whence they were taken. You will find that not one word respecting so great a factor of man's being as an undying principle, was either spoken or shadowed.

You will find there St. Paul's grounds for saying that "the first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from Heaven:" the first, being the type and condi-

tion of *all* according to the flesh, and the second, to be the "door," the "way" and the "life" itself.

You will find that if the principal entity of man is praising God among His ministering spirits, those "that are fallen asleep in Christ *are not* perished," and that their life does not depend, as Paul contended, on the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

You will find many things in your progress through the Word of Life, which, stripped of the vesture of sectarian opinion will present an altogether new and different sense, and in many cases will stand in direct and actual contradiction to your pre-conceived views. Death instead of being "the gate of endless joy," will shrink back to its original purpose and become the curse of fallen man. In short, as regards the life question, you will be able to follow the easy lead from Adam to Moses, to Abraham, through the prophets, to the first coming of Christ, and on through the ministry of the apostles, across the borders of this present, into the thousand years awarded to those who have "part in the first resurrection."

As long as you find the flowers by the way

lovelier than you ever found elsewhere; as long as the song of the birds beguile you into the belief that they are seraph's anthems; as long as you seem to feel in the perfumed breezes the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit, the path will be a joyous one to you. And may you find for *yourself*, the way, and the door and the life.

Pause at Mount Calvary and stay till "*it is finished*," stay until the last drop of the healing fountain has trickled down the shaft of the cross, and the clear waters of life are typified by the colorless stream that flows from His side. Be sure that during the event most important to man, while you note the climax of Jewish rage and hatred, and the cruel results of wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction, while your eyes rain tears of sympathy and your heart overflows with contrition for the part you have acted, you pray him to remember you when He comes "in His kingdom." Take up then *your* cross, and through the rest of the way never be ashamed to be seen bearing it.

MORAL, SOCIAL AND SECULAR STATE OF THIS AGE OF THE PRESENT.

Before closing this part of our subject it is deemed proper to lay before the reader a general view of moral, social and governmental relations, as contrasted with an age taking for its rule of life the Gospel of Christ.

Let us carefully compare things as they are, with what they should be, and note how far, as a whole, the world has gone out of the way.

The tidings brought by the angel to the shepherds and rounded out by the accompanying choir was "Peace on Earth" and "Good Will to Men."

The history of all the wars related by sacred and profane authors, the heaps of slain, the throes of dying agony, the bereavement of father, mother, kindred and lover, and all the dire evils consequent on "horrid war," are the direct fruits of unbelief, and joined to all other sins, retard the coming of the millennial kingdom, in that they prevent the accomplishment of God's determined number. To make our

meaning better understood, had man kept his hands unstained by war, his numerical increase would have been greater, and the sin had not existed, and the kingdom of God had come nigher. For when the fore-ordained number is complete, the prophecy belonging to the present will be fulfilled, and present will be changed into future.

Another powerful factor in the hindrance of the approaching reign of righteousness is intemperance, and more especially the use of alcoholic drinks. This dread evil is older than war, and is pictured on the earlier pages of the present. The disposition of man to seek out inventions and a perverted appetite placed in position, without doubt, the most powerful engine for the destruction of the race.

Ye pitiable sufferers from this hideous curse, write the long list of its dead victims ; marshal its horrors of woe, want and misery in almost endless line, set in array the shattered intellects, the blighted hopes, the bedimmed prospects, the alienated affections, the ruined lives, the broken hearts and the horrors of retrospection. Inventory the squalid poverty, the hun-

ger, the nakedness, the blushes of abused virtue's holy sense of shame, the progress in sin until sacred virtue abdicates her throne in the heart of one of whom in a little earlier childhood the Master declared, "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Summon the obscenity, profanity, the oaths and the blasphemies before you and count them. Conjure the falsehoods, the thefts, the gambling, the forgeries, the perjuries, the wrangles, the brawls, the robberies, and the murders, and then enumerate them.

Enter the prisons and catalogue the list whom alcohol has incarcerated ; who are serving out the penalty of outraged Justice, or are waiting for some fatal Friday to expiate on the shameful gallows, *crimes instigated by a curse sanctioned by Law.*

Seek out and tell the thousands of young men and *boys* who are in the incipient stages of the drunkard's career !

Find what is the sum of the skilled in the arts and sciences, the profound in logic and the deep in research ; men of high promise, educated, cultured, refined, who are willing to dispossess noble Reason of the guidance of

their lives in favor of the demon Rum! Set up in hideous phalanx all those whom Rum has made maniacs, and who have themselves blown out the lamp of their own Present! And while you survey with horror the spectacle, resolve in the depth of your soul, never to countenance the traffic or use of rum! And you may safely say, had this state of things never existed, God's number would be nearer full, and His Kingdom nearer at hand. But the strong arm of the law is between the wretched inebriate and his reformation; interposes between his suffering wife and the poorest necessities of life; withholds bread, clothing, comfort, education and religious teaching from their children; while the social verdict bars them from their place among the good and pure; and, goaded to the verge of endurance they descend to the depths of sin and shame! But the scales of God's justice weigh with nice distinction their sins and sufferings, and their Father in Heaven *charges* a heavy balance *to the account of social pride and Godless law!*

Ye stalwart champions of a holy cause whose thundering and soul-reaching eloquence has so often proclaimed the sin of drunken-

ness, the shamelessness of the traffic and the monstrous crime of its chief abettor, has "your labor indeed been in vain in the Lord? Has your bread been cast upon the waters," to return in full cargoes "after many days." *O, how many are the days!*

Ye noble and untiring workers of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, renew your vow! Gird on afresh your armour! Make haste to the battle! God has placed the sword of the Spirit, which is the sword of conquest, in your hands! And with that irresistible weapon He bids you assail the fortress of law! March forth, then, to the mightiest victory that the annals of conflict have ever recorded! Lay low the barriers that shut you from the ear of national law! Demand the release of the prisoners of the tyrant! Point in righteous anger to the debased estate of your sisters! Exhibit in mental photograph fathers, mothers, brothers, kindred, lovers and friends in the thraldom of the monster! Cast at the feet of the magnates of law the protest of every true woman in the land in the form of petition, asking in the name of humanity, of religion, of justice *and*

of God, the right of suffrage in this *one issue!* I believe firmly that to you Christian women of our country belongs the *power and the success* of sweeping from our land the greatest social and moral evil and the cruelest legalized sin that ever befell mankind in all their degeneracy. Ring in the ears of legislation, with a fervor and a persistency born of tremendous import: "Avenge me of mine adversary!" until the love of rum shall yield to your faithful importunity, and your effort be crowned with success and victory. And an admiring world will speedily follow your glorious lead, and the prayer, "Thy kingdem come," will be offered in stronger faith. War, with the constructive skill brought to bear in the production of deadly engines and factors, must necessarily eliminate itself, unless the powers of earth discard their use. For the armies of nations will, with betterprotest than heretofore, refuse to sacrifice themselves in wars to which they deem so many lives paramount considerations.

We do not believe that the sins of mankind do, or possibly can affect the Creator. The consequences of sin among the children

of men fall upon themselves and their fellows. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Death is the natural and inevitable consequence of sin. It is its result and finality, because the trend of sin is to weaken, demoralize and reduce the physical being to its normal conditions of earthy element; and this is death. Therefore we feel an assurance in offering the conclusion that the greatest sins are those that produce the greatest number of deaths in the world.

Passing over the lesser death-producing causes that exist, we will glance at the literature of this age. With mammon for their deity and incentive, the writers of popular fiction have secured competence, amassed wealth and flooded the world with what the vitiated tastes of the masses have pronounced indispensable. Consider the many who never read anything but the sensational and imaginative creations of celebrated writers of unrealities, who shed rivers of tears over the painted sufferings of some angelic hero or heroine whose eulogist and creator is the successful novelist Take into account the vast number of these lachrymose readers who never

shed a tear over the pathetic and real scenes and sufferings of the Man of Sorrows, and who from their childhood up to the hour when they were gathered in death, *never read the Bible through.* Permit me to tell you that if you will study the Book which is of more value to you than all other literature, with half the assiduity with which you pore over the imagery of fiction, you will be very likely to acquire a wholesome relish for something that will be of actual use to you, and prove a literature that will pass review in the ordeal of Divine criticism. But it may not be contradicted, that there are works of fiction having for their object the desire to bring their readers nearer to the great issues belonging to the present and future.

I shall not assume to condemn this class of literature, but may safely say that "from the beginning it was not so." I shall leave the issues of this question in the hands of Christian ethologists, promising to respect their verdict. It is the descent from pure and high Christian narrative, wherein moral and religious sentiments were inculcated down to the poor level of earth-born affections that we should deprecate.

No reflections will be here cast upon any treatise on Platonic or pure human love, for their places are among the first moral considerations. And it is worthy of note that in the years past many books have been given to the public of a decidedly religious character, carrying along with their narrative a fine thread of pure and Christian romance that has elicited a proper appreciation. But those works called for frequent reference to the Book of Books, and their writers either aimed at skepticism or had for their object the spiritual welfare of their readers.

We will leave this topic after exhorting all novel readers to keep close to their best religious interests by bounding their reading tastes and their earthly affections by the rules and precepts of the Scriptures, and not to suffer the record to be placed against them, that they have not read the Bible through. "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me."

The grandeur and splendor of Solomon's temple has ever been the excuse for converting the money and treasure that should, by the

Master's command, be used in supplying the wants of the widow and the fatherless, feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, into the palatial magnificence and costly appointments of modern church edifices. When Hiram, king of Tyre, out of friendship for King David, made the compact with Solomon for building material, the wise king was highly favored in the matter of cost. He made the proper levy on his own subjects for labor, and when finished it was the wonder of the world for beauty, richness and magnificence. At that particular time, under the righteous rule of a God-fearing king, the worshippers in that temple were not carried away from their deep and true devotions by the glitter and glory of its unrivalled beauty or the marvels of its matchless workmanship, for the presence of the divine inhabitant was sufficient to chasten the worship of His votaries.

It was not that magnificence of structure or expense in decoration was desired by Him for whom Solomon built the house, for he declares by the mouth of the martyr Stephen in his last words, quoted from the prophet : "Heaven is my throne, and earth is my foot-

stool, what house will ye build me? saith the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?" It appears that, pleased with their zeal and alacrity in the work, at a time of unparalleled prosperity, and as a means of diverting the Jews from idolatrous worship and concentrating their devotions on Himself, He permitted and encouraged the building of that marvel of beauty, Solomon's temple. The temple in the days of our Savior, of which He prophesied that it should be thrown down so low that not one stone should be left upon another, was the last edifice for the worship of God that had *any right* to be built in magnificence of structure or extravagance in decorative appointments. Behold the humble Jesus of Nazareth dispensing the gospel of life upon the hillsides, on the sea shore and in the vessels belonging to the fishermen, and if He entered into the synagogues it was to perfectly expound a perverted law, or bring back from wrested Scriptures and prophecies, and make plain the tradition-clouded way of life, shadowed and foretold by them. And if He entered the gorgeous temple it was that the lion of the tribe of Judah might

beard the lions of a wicked and perverse priesthood in their own "den of thieves."

Directly after the crucifixion behold the church of Christ scattered and wandering from place to place, shut out from the temple, cast out of the synagogues, gathering by dint of persistent preaching and their strong faith, the humble and the poor, who, all told, could not have raised the funds with which to build and decorate one of our modern houses of worship. The meager funds they solicited found their way through the channels of *Holy Charity* to the needs of the poor within their Christian circle, who were never taxed to raise towering steeples, costly bells, rich carpets or expensively cushioned seats.

My friends, could Paul have carried in current coin, bearing on its face the "image and superscription of Cæsar," the value of one modern church's superfluous appointments and decorations, what a relief the gift would have been to the "poor saints at Jerusalem." And if the millions of treasure expended in useless and unchristian vanities that make so large a part in the temples of worship to-day could be expended in the holy purposes of the

Divine Master, the poor could indeed have the gospel preached to them, clothed in raiment that culpable fashion and a Godless social system would not feel an unchristian sense of shame in listening to the words of life beside them. Had St. Paul been dressed after the manner of our day's clergy, it is doubtful if he would have burdened Timothy with the cloak he left at Troas.

Daughter of Zion, turn to the third chapter of Isaiah and see if you do not behold yourselves mirrowed in some of its verses.

We may not borrow from Solomon's age the furnishings of his temple, the bejewelled and gaudy dress of its priesthood, or the costly extravagance and pomp of its worship, for they in no manner comport with the unassuming dignity of the high calling of the humble followers of our Lord and Master.

Every cent expended in vain ornamentation or superfluous luxury, and from that to the millions lying beyond the reach of God's poor, will, when we face the results, speak to us through lips that ever pleaded for the poor, the sentence expressed more than eighteen hundred years ago, and which has lain on the

sacred page in vivid characters: "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me:" while we offer as our only palliation: "O, we loved the frivolous vanities of the earthly life more than we did these Thy poor brethren."

If the Savior required the rich young man to sell his possessions and give the proceeds to the poor, will not as much of that requirement hold good as would oblige us to dispense the purchase money of needless and unbecoming ornament in behalf of the needy? Imagine the dress of the Son of Man, could you fancy a "gold ring" or costly clothing? In short, could the picture represent Him in the costume of the clergyman who preached to you last Sunday? He wore no frivolities and He tolerated none. He was our pattern in these matters as well as in those of spiritual things. No disciple down to the universal or Romish church were permitted to wear extravagances whose value was of need among the poor.

If it be claimed that God not only permitted but ordered the varied decorations of the Mosaic tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, breastplates, &c., it will of course be conced-

ed. But that will offer no extenuating plea, for the heathen about them employed in their worship a vast amount of glitter and pageantry, and it was necessary that this should be outdone in order to present attractions to keep a frivolous nation from idolatry.

There is none of pageantry or jewelry or "outward adorning" necessary in the humble religion of Jesus Christ, and you are counseled to sit down and mentally sort out the things not consistent with a humble walk in the Way and discard them, for they are the weights that so easily beset us. Let us buy with our money only the things we need, and we will then possess the means to fulfill the righteous precepts of the friend of the poor. For adornment let us buy of Him "gold tried in the fire, and white raiment," that we "may be clothed." Then when the nations bring their treasures of "glory and honor" into the Holy City, we may be found rich in true wealth and clothed in the "wedding garment" when we sit down to the eternal feast and the Master drinks with us of the new wine in His Father's Kingdom.

I desire to place before the reader the prin-

cipal causes of apathy in regard to repentance, reform and an interest in the important concerns of the present and future. To those who have accepted the grace of Christ and possess the earnest of their inheritance in their consolation, that seemingly total carelessness and indifference on the subject appears absolutely unaccountable. For the apathetic the Christian draws anew the plan of their salvation: he appeals to them in fervent exhortation to give the subject a candid and serious consideration, he lays before them their inexcusable and base ingratitude in refusing to respond to the love of their best and truest friend. He contrasts the condition and prospects in this life of those in and out of Christ. He paints in glowing colors, as his convictions in relation to a future state may be, the ruin of the finally impenitent, or the bliss of the redeemed, and with an eloquence inspired by the momentous import of the subject to them, entreats them to yield to *the love without a parallel.* But the listener remains apathetic and unmoved. The subject in treatment and application is, to him, stale. It is not sufficiently sensational. His heart

has become callous by reading emotional literature. Or the god of this world exhibits for him greater attractions. Or conflicting sectarian renderings of the Scriptures have made him skeptical. Or, in his opinion, the authenticity of the Bible has not been conclusively established. Will you please set aside, for the time, these and all other causes which conspire to produce this apathy, and *read your Bible through very carefully* and, as you progress, collect all its not very varied subjects and, rejecting human commentary, compare Scripture with Scripture and spiritual things with spiritual? I think I can safely promise you that your interest will be awakened and your apathy gone.

The day in our present has come, when Christians seem on the verge of unity; when they are more willing to count as valueless the differences that have so long stood in the way of perfect brotherhood, and with which the Word of God had nothing to do; when Jesus Christ and His Cross will be the rallying point and center of all Christian denominations; when Christ and Him crucified will be considered abundantly sufficient for the salvation

of men, without sectarian or academic theologies.

In many places there have arisen unostentatious but comfortable edifices where Christians of every name may worship the Lord their God ; and it is your testimony that in no other places have you enjoyed so much of religious freedom.

The union of christian effort in revival work touches the heart of the sinner and draws largely on the influences of the Holy Spirit. You who have more money than you can conscientiously spend, buy the real estate, erect a plain but commodious building without steeple, without belfry and without extravagance in outline or detail, and present it as a free-will offering to your community. Call upon the shepherds of all flocks to dispense the gospel of *free grace--free in every sense*, in the free sanctuary, whose "builder and maker" is yourself. Then indeed will you have made "to yourself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," when the frequenters of that chapel shall point toward you and say : "He loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue !"

Professed followers of Jesus Christ who pride

yourselves on belonging to the higher circles of society, but whose claim the Master never did nor ever will countenance, divest yourselves of every shred of the ungodly idea of social caste and receive the poorest and humblest brother on the christian footing of *equality*, and let the Master—and not you, weigh the difference between you. How can you defer this plain duty? "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom?" Is it as true of us to-day as it was when James wrote his general epistle, "that we have despised the poor? *If ye have respect to persons ye commit sin!*" Does there "come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring in goodly apparel?" and does there follow at a respectful distance "a poor man in vile raiment?" And do you have respect to the man in "gay clothing" and give him a seat in a "good place"? while the poor man is bidden to stand up or sit in a place where he will present the greatest possible contrast to your own social position? Verily this is the condition of the professed disciples of Him *who said all He could say in disapproval of such a Social Evil!* Verily this is the Laodicean state pict-

ured by the Revelator. And faith without works has brought upon us this social disease, which, like all diseases, must have their causes removed before a cure can be effected.

"YE CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON!"

THE END OF THE PRESENT.

Adam and Eve, and every offspring that has succeeded them, have in their day been ready, fit and prepared for the Kingdom of Heaven. They have all been what the Master would have the children of the kingdom to be. They are set on their feet in the Present, sinless and pure. Not one taint of original sin, or even the latent fearful legacy inherited from wicked progenitors, has effaced God's glorious image. Where among all the poets, the painters and sculptors, where among all the fond fancies and imageries in the mother heart, called up by her love and by the purity, the beauty and entire loveliness of her little child, has the perfect meed been so well awarded as in those memorable words in Luke 18:16.

It is a beautiful thought that all the little children will hear the rustle of the heavenly wings in the dark grave where their loving friend has prepared their bed and laid them to sleep in Him—for "He giveth His beloved sleep," and shall come forth in childlike j o

to be again taken in His loving arms and be recognized as part of the kingdom at hand.

And this was our estate at one time. None living may complain that the Creator gave him not a fair start on the journey of life. But evil example, evil precept and evil surroundings have brought us into subjection to the powers of this world.

The agency of the little child cannot affect its condition until its accountability is developed, and on the instant in which that transpires, if it choose the better part, no matter how crude are its ideas, no matter how feeble its faith, it will glisten among His "jewels" when He makes them up. The test of a child's accountability may not be made upon its infantile sense of right and wrong. Adam's responsibility came not to him until in his agency he was deemed competent to make his choice. So with the child; and from the sure conclusions involved in the above facts, our Savior gave us the gracious words: "Seek Me early and *ye* SHALL *find Me.*"

Let us note the fact that in the innocent heart of the little child there is no place for sectarian theories or doctrines of men.

O teach your child through the sweet influences of parental love to follow the story of the babe in the manger, His obedience in childhood, His baptism in Jordan, how He healed the ailing and raised the dead, how He regarded the beauty of flowers and the purity of little children, how He taught the simple and plain truth and warned men against error ; how He taught His followers to pray ; how, on account of their sins and the sins of the world, He gave His life for the children of men ; how He was abused and mocked and scourged and led away to Calvary and nailed with great spikes to the cross, and pierced with a spear, and how His blood washes away the sins of mankind, how He manifested His power and divine nature by rising from His grave and ascending to His Father in Heaven, and how He loves them there, as well as when He was here, and is waiting for the time to come when He will call them too from their graves and fold them in His arms again. Teach them to love Him and give Him their hearts and obey Him in this life, and that He will be their joy and their life in the world to come. The child's sympathies

will be touched, its interest awakened, its grateful love kindled, and it will seek its Savior early *and will find Him !*

But father, and mother, would you in these lessons feel a sort of disgust over what you call "cant," and withhold the teachings ? If so, you are advised to review and consider your own situation, remembering that your child is dependent on you for early instruction, and for its advantages. Since the world began it has ever been thus. Millions of men and women have left the high estate of child-like purity and come down to the end of their present without any interest in a coming future. And so it will continue to be till the hour when God's number shall be full ; until He whose right it is, takes the kingdom ; until man's agency and accountability shall be taken from him and he sins no more ; until He reveals the lives hidden with Him in God, until the trumpet calls from their graves the subjects of His kingdom ; and He comes "to His own and His own " receives Him.

THE FUTURE.

INTERMEDIATE.

"Man dieth and wasteth away: Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?"

We assume that the intermediate state of the "dead in Christ" has its bounds within what we have denominated the present; and have also considered man's individual present as closing with his life; and as so large a number of the dead remain in their graves after the first resurrection; until the first stage of the future has passed; we shall treat Job's question as belonging to the future. "Where is he?" and what is he? after living out the few days that make the sum of his existence here, are inquiries that have taxed the profoundest study, the most laborious research and the broadest thought. It has raised multitudes of hypotheses, and drawn innumerable conclusions, and in most of them there is lacking the element of sound logic; for in no case may man contradict the express declaration of Him

who knows best of all the purposes in man's creation, the elements that were employed in his formation, how to so apply the principle of life to inert matter as to produce a living, thinking and intelligent being; who knew best of all and who only knows the process by which man returns to primitive matter, and who only knows how to answer the question before us.

It is not the design here to summon the long list of witnesses in support of the facts regarding this issue. There are from one to half a dozen Bibles in almost every house in the land, and in them are recorded these plain and sure testimonies; to which, as in duty bound, I earnestly refer you.

The principal object throughout this little work will be to induce you to take up the Scriptures, and with strong purpose seek out all it contains that is intended for your instruction and general good. And permit me to say to you that the contradictions of man-made theology *are not* chargeable to the Bible; and to advise that you do not make any effort to reconcile them to the text of the Word of Life. It does not require a highly educated

reader to demonstrate this fact to his satisfaction.

Job, in his prosperity, had enjoyed life in an eminent degree. Surrounded by all that riches could confer, he was the bountiful steward of his God's temporal blessings. Happy in the approval of heaven, blest in his family and in the friendship of a large circle of admiring acquaintances, he stood in the gates and waited for the naked, that he might clothe them ; for the hungry, that he might feed them ; for the oppressed, that he might plead their cause and right their wrongs ; for the widow, that he might dispel the shadows of want ; for the fatherless, that they might find in him a father ; for the lame and the blind, that he might be their helper ; for the sick and the afflicted, that he might minister unto them. And these were indeed the chief sources of his happiness. The balance of blessing in favor of the giver !

It is not strange, then, that in his sore affliction Job should utter in bewildered astonishment his complaint and protest. He follows his prospective sufferings down to the hour and act of death, and in the climax of his

grief asks the great question under our consideration: "Where is he?" and what is he? The unbeliever, ever ready with a response, answers "Nowhere." And to our other and kindred query, "Nothing." He will tell you that the material elements of the earth are eternal, but that the portion of them which were formed into that living, breathing and wonderful being, man, can possess no other eternity of existence than that common to the general volume.

Do not believe him! For while he proves by clouds of scientific argument to his own satisfaction the ridiculous impossibility of a re-animation of a creature who had gone back to his primitive particles, all his science and philosophy *must fail* to touch the fact that every representative of that dust had once stood upon its feet a living, breathing and intelligent *man!* Then, reader, you may ask him: "*Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?*"

Whoever demonstrates a miracle by science works another. There is more of miracle in many things which we see about us than human philosophy can explain.

There is no doubt that infinite wisdom is beyond the comprehension of finite knowledge, however high the pride of human intellect may aspire.

Metaphysics is the ante-room of infinity, lighted only by the dim rays from the lamp of speculative philosphy, and until the fervid gleams of light through the door to eternity illumine its gloom no finite mind may hope to secure its secrets.

There is no more of miracle in the re-animation of the dead than in their original creation or in the reproduction of the human species.

Man, since his creation, has progressed in knowledge and his researches do not end—but are only suspended at his death. "The dead know not any thing." This declaration will be found to be abundantly borne out through all the Bible wherever the subject is treated. And this *ought to be* "the conclusion of the whole matter." To assume, then, in the face of the express reading of Revelation—in direct contradiction of the Word of Life, that man possesses an imperishable entity, independent of his material composition, and which is arro-

gantly claimed to be a direct part of the Creator; and that this eternal principle was breathed into his nostrils when his formation was accomplished, is to pervert the testimony of sacred writ, to teach man-made opinions for doctrine and to detract from the well established beauty and importance of the gospel of the Resurrection. Please to note as you study your Bible, that if God at man's creation had "breathed into his nostrils" a living eternal principle, He would have placed him in the exact position—to prevent which, access to the tree of life was refused him. The quality of his being would have been such that the death of his "earthy" could not be the fulfillment of the curse. The case stand thus: The man ate of the forbidden tree, in disobedience of the command, and by that act has, for a time determined, frustrated the design and object in his creation, and entailed the consequences of his sin upon all succeeding generations. If, while under these conditions he partake of the tree of Life of which he, when placed in the garden, was permitted to "freely eat," an eternity of existence under the same conditions would be acquired, and that error

of all errors, that sum of all cruelty, that disgrace to the attributes of the Creator and to human intelligence, that vindictive, savage and more than brutal charge against Omnipotence; the long cherished but revolting, the long preached but shamefully "false doctrine" of most intense but hopeless, insufferable but remediless eternal fiery torments *would not even then have been true*, nor one shade of so fearful a gospel cloud one feature of God's grand design in our destiny.

Note in your studious progress through the Word the vast stretch of difference between the wild, perverse and totally unsustained teachings of clerical dogmas and scholastic theologies, and the *Truth* as given in Revelation.

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is therefore the parent of the most hideous monster in all the creeds of Christianity, or in all the diversified teachings of heathenism.

But *hold!* Look over and beyond the dire debris of the traditions of men, and the "doctrines of devils," and behold "*Life and Immortality*" *brought to light* through the gospel!

Carefully trace this sublime theme from Genesis to Revelation and strengthen your faith in the promises, brighten your lives as Christians and joyfully exhibit the Pearl you have purchased.

The reasonable idea that God considered it needful to reduce man, in consequence of his fall, to the condition of his primitive elements by his death and "wasting away," that He could in his second stage of being, according to His purpose, endow him with a second and more perfect life, may perhaps belong to the realms of speculative theology, but it carries with it the fact that such was the exact means employed.

Then, after the provision of the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," the climax of the curse—death—was the first step toward man's resurrection, and toward undoing the evils his disobedience had brought upon him, furnishing us with uncontrovertible evidence of the single entity of man "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." Paul, in his similitude, proposes to bring no living imperishable germ from the court of heaven to aid in the resurrection of the "body

that shall be," knowing well, as he did, that a hope in Christ is the Christian voucher, and knowing well that the buried kernel *will germinate.*

"Man dieth" in every case in accordance with the relative laws of his being. In this sense, ever since the fall, natural causes have produced natural consequences. Experimental and scientific efforts are constantly being employed to produce the results that transpired only by a touch of the hem of the Master's garment, who, to leave on record evidences of His divinity, suspended the natural law, that He might employ the Divine Power. But human skill and effort are in vain. Fainter grows the pulse, shorter grows the breath, and the glazing eyes turn a farewell on weeping partner and distracted children. A few spasmodic gasps and the sufferer is gone. His obsequies are celebrated in tears, and his body is borne to the open grave and hidden from our sight. He "wasteth away." The elements of his own decomposition are within him, for he is "sown in corruption." In process of time he "returns" to dust. In sight of all these things we can not but pronounce

the being that once in the hands of his Maker became "a living soul": *Wholly Mortal!* But richest thought in the train! If the mutual confession has passed between our buried brother and the Master, the elements of a new and deathless life *are also sown with him, for he "died in faith!"*

How do these plain, consistent and reasonable teachings of God's word comport with the conflicting "traditions of men"? How can men ignore these truths and declare that heaven, the throne room of the Almighty, is the gathering place of immortal entities, when in reality they live only in the imaginings of those who, not satisfied with the humble estate of man in the life and death of his present, accord to him the life attribute of the eternal: "If Christ be not raised, then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."

Paul believed that sleep was the intermediate condition of all who die. He believed that the future life of all men depended on the resurrection of Christ. He taught no immortality of any part of man in Heaven. He taught no eternal existence of any part of

man in the cruel hell of orthodoxy. He made faith in Jesus Christ the condition of uninterrupted life and unutterable bliss. And it is with joyous hope that we fall asleep in Christ, to awaken in "His likeness." Let us all "lay hold on the hope set before us" that, in the event of death, we may hear the sweetly whispered words: "Sleep, child of the Promise; I am the Resurrection and the Life."

THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

It has always seemed to me that Job's question, "If a man die shall he live again?" was asked in anxiety and uncertainty. We must depend upon Revelation for the solution of this most important problem; at the same time aided, perhaps, by relevant theories foundparallel with Bible evidence. Every human being who has "borne the image of the earthy shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

Everybody that has, or will yet be "sown in corruption," shall be "raised in incorruption." Every "little child," whether of Jew or gentile, of pagan or Christian, of bond or free, of all climes and nations in this great world, who have left the stage of their Present and have gone to sleep in the Master's arms will hear His voice and come at His call: innumerable in multitude, radiant in beauty and peerless in purity. What marvel, then, that our Savior should, in the streets of Jerusalem, cast His eyes upon this richest of all scenes and say: *Of such* is the Kingdom of

Heaven ? What marvel that He loved them, and that He folded them to His heart and enjoyed a foretaste of the first resurrection ?

It is a sweet thought that when the grave gives up its dead, parental and filial love will draw parent and child, brother and sister together in joyous recognition. Every far-off gentile, every son and daughter of Israel, every child of Adam save Enoch, Melchisedek, Moses and Elijah and those who "are alive and remain shall all be made alive !"

Suddenly, at a time when the children of men are busiest in gathering the fleeting and fading vanities of earth ; suddenly, when they are buying, selling, building, adorning, "marrying and giving in marriage ;" suddenly, when the throne of mammon seems securest, "the times and seasons which the Father hath put in His own power" will have arrived, and the trump of the archangel shall awaken those who sleep in Christ, shall change the living Christian and the dead saint, the righteous of the law and the gentile in the faith into the likeness of the glorious body.

But while the one is being "taken and the other left"; while those who have the sign and

seal of Christ's ownership are hovering with Him over the change necessary for the "restitution of all things," the final installment of the "wages of sin" will be paid to all who chose death rather than life. God's number is full, and in the Revelator's idea was beyond human power to enumerate. This multitude of multitudes is awaiting the coronation of the Prince of David's kingly house! Is witnessing the entrance of Abraham into his promised possessions. O ye! the "thrust out," take with you your base ingratitude, your refusal to close with tireless offers of life; take with you all the wickedness wherein ye gloried; all the vain pomp and splendor of "the former things" —take them with you and hide with them beneath the dark shadows of death, until a mandate ye cannot disobey, summons and arraigns you for judgment. In concluding this branch of our subject, permit me to suggest a very reasonable supposition. Let us present the case just as it stands. If it were known that within forty days all the foregoing scenes would transpire, would you still be as unconcerned as now! Would the exhortations, the entreaties, the pleadings of those who are so

much more interested in your well-being than are yourselves, fall as to-day so fruitless at your feet? Would the words, atonement, blood, repentance, forgiveness, conversion, faith, hope, love, cross and salvation furnish you with as much material for ridicule or disgust as now? Or suppose the time be set at forty years; would not those years be spent to better purpose than now? The truth remains the same, reader, though that day were placed forty centuries in the future! "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."

If you *will* look upon this matter in the light of utter selfishness, you are reminded that, though forty days and forty years may be allotted you; *not one hour* of that time is assured you.

"Though a sinner do evil an hundred times and his days be prolonged; yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God." "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the *first resurrection.* On such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a THOUSAND YEARS!"

A THOUSAND YEARS.

Who may essay the portrayal of the innocence and happiness of Adam and Eve, and their multiplying progeny in their Eden home under the conditions of obedience? We may theorize and speculate, we may call to our aid all the fair imagery which the finite mind can picture, and fail. In no other manner can the boundless love of the Creator toward the creature be illustrated than in the glorious realities of the millennial age. Here we find the fallen raised, the lost restored, the dishonored image glorified, the "natural body" whose life depended on the conditions of material organism, warmed and animated and alert with the current that flows from the fountain of life. Here is restored to man his primitive candidacy, his obedience not exacted, because his accountability was buried and lost with his sinnership in his death. We find his feet established in the paths that surely lead to the tree of life. Here stand in living green the shapely trees of God's garden,

and among them, with the elements of death, the consciousness of evil and divine prohibition taken away, the tree of knowledge, of good and evil. Here in full and ceaseless fruitage they yield luxurious and refreshing aliment for bodies possessing the highest capabilities of enjoyment, but *never hunger.*

In the original Eden the birds of the air, the beasts of the field and all the creeping things were partakers of the Creator's boundless bounty, and fed on food common to all living. If they, like mankind, were given life, and if in them God's purpose was progression of being, or if He made them to fulfill the good pleasure of His will, may we not hope to find them in the restitution of all things? "which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began."

But no student of the starry skies may essay to tell us which world among its millions shall be their home.

Here are those lovely legacies of primitive Eden, the flowers! through whose aroma and beauty we have so often worshipped their Creator; of whom a lover of flowers once said: "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

Here, because we shall know as we are known, we shall meet and greet those we loved in the earthly life, who have chosen the better part, and with them ascribe glory and honor to Him who is the prince of so great a salvation.

Who is this on whom all eyes are turned? with a princely bearing and a beauty indescribable? Is this He who came from Edom? with dyed garments from Bozrah? Whose apparel is glorious? On whose kingly brow sits the coronal of majesty, and in whose hand is the scepter of righteousness and peace? Who is this that cometh with flying feet and outstretched arms, face radiant with the joy of glad recognition. Listen! as an avenue is opened to the throned central figure there arises in subdued but eager tones the benison: "Blessed art thou among women! and as she nears the feet of Him she once sought sorrowing—see! the scepter lowers, and the conqueror's smile brightened by holy filial love as He repeats the last words He uttered to her, "Woman, behold thy son!"

A group stands around the brilliant throne waiting till one of their number is released

from the embrace of the Prince, between whom and the one whose head is pillowed on His bosom, seems to exist a strong bond of affection. It is John, the beloved disciple, and the waiting ones are Peter, James and the other disciples, who now behold the teachings and prophecies fulfilled in Him. They remember the mount of transfiguration, and Peter sees with joy the tabernacles which his random advice once proposed. There are Mary and Martha and their brother, whose greetings tell us of the love they bore each other in the old life. There are those who in faith received the word through the teachings, the examples and the miracles of the Master. There are the millions, who through the preached gospel have washed their garments in the fountain at the cross, and now with jubilant voice join in the mighty chorus: "*Worthy the Lamb!*" *And where are you and I?* There is a multitude in an ecstacy of delight, for the least and the last of the apostles has just told the interested crowd to wait until the stage on which they have just entered shall have prepared them to behold the face of the Father; shall have made

them all they would have been but for disobedience, and shall have made them through faith in the Prince and obedience to the gospel, fit to be partakers of the tree of life. He has told them that at that time all who are yet under the dominion of death will be raised with incorruptible bodies, and that then the return of the rebellious children of Jacob will begin. He has told them that an highway will be there, a way that the prophets called the way of holiness, in which wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err; that the redeemed shall walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with everlasting joy upon their heads; that they shall obtain joy and gladness, and that sorrow and sighing shall flee away. He tells them that one of the prophecies of the Prince is fulfilled before their eyes, for the meek do inherit the earth; that of the increase of the government and peace of this kingdom there shall be no end. Here, saith he, ye who were aforetime weary and heavy laden is your rest! Now hath He who carrieth the keys of death and hell unlocked the gates of the grave for you, and like Him ye are alive forevermore. "It

is," saith he, "with joy that I stand here this day and behold the fruits of mine apostleship! It is with joy that we can triumphantly shout 'Death' to us is swallowed up in victory! O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! And songs and loud anthems of praise to Him in whom ALL shall be made alive!"

Isaiah with radiant mien arises and with his fervid eloquence and rapt imagery proclaims the fulfillment of his inspired prophecies. "In the days of Ahaz, King of Judah," saith he, "the Lord sent me unto that wicked Prince, saying: 'ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.' But Ahaz said: 'I will not ask.' Then the Lord gave Israel a sign; 'Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call His name Immanuel.' Behold the Virgin's Son! Behold God with us! Yea unto us a *Child was born;* and unto us a *Son was given;* and the government *is upon His shoulder;* and His name is Wonderful, Counselor; the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the

Prince of Peace.' 'Of the increase of His government and peace, there shall be *no end*, upon the throne whereon He reigneth, to order and establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even forever.' For the days are yet to come, when 'the mountains shall depart and the hills shall be removed; and not then shall the covenant of the Lord's peace be removed. The foundations of Israel's habitation shall be laid with sapphires, and all his children shall be taught of the Lord.' For by my mouth the God of Jacob hath revealed unto Israel the punishments for his sins, and His blessings when they shall be accomplished. And in that day an ensign shall stand for the people, and the Gentiles shall seek unto it, and the rest shall be glorious. Thus saith the Lord God: 'Behold I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.' Break forth into song ye saints of God who through the dispensation of Moses saw shadowed forth the final sacrifice! Who, in the promise to Abraham, saw your sure hope! Who accepted the Messiah in

His humiliation; by which faith ye are this day partakers of His glory! Who consented not unto those who, by wresting the Scriptures, made the promises of God of none effect unto themselves. Sing the glad anthem: Worthy the Lamb who was slain, ye who carried His cross to the borders of your graves in firm and true faith in Christ and Him crucified! Who looked unto Him as the Author, but who is now become the Finisher of your faith! Yea, sing the glad song of Moses and the Lamb, all ye His people, saying: 'Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of Saints. Who shall not fear before thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name, for Thou only art Holy! For all nations shall come and worship before thee for thy judgments are made manifest.'" "Rejoice that ye can look with sure confidence on the Promise of the return of *All men* to the Love and favor of the Creator and Father of all! And this is my joy! The chiefest of my millennial glory! And this shall be our highest Theme until the Lord God shall cause to come up out of their graves, all the nations

that are scattered under the whole Heaven !" Will Pilate and she, who was his wife, be there ? Will she tell the man who, against his better judgment, gave way to a brutal priesthood and delivered the Just One to death; that this is He, concerning whom she had the "wonderful dream" ; and that what is now transpiring was the perfect imagery of her vision ? Did Pilate in their banishment draw from his wife's prophetic influence and continual pleadings, the *Hope* that sets him face to face with the Crucified ?

It will be exciting to visit the shores of the sea of Gallilee, the Mount of Transfiguration and the scenes of the loaves and fishes. The prophet Elijah will explain to us how John the Baptist—being as great as any born of woman, was less than the least in the Kingdom of Heaven, why he was no more than "a reed shaken by the wind ;" by informing us that, when Herod, at the request of a wicked woman, beheaded him in prison, his identity was lost ; and that the spirit and power of Elijah returned to the presence of his God. The Roman centurion who conducted the crucifixion will show us the arena whereon

were enacted scenes of such vast import to the children of men. Perhaps, at the request of the beloved disciple, the Master may, by the now freed law of atomic affinities, reproduce the *Sacred Cross*, while the redeemed of the Lord—as they behold the symbol of the Faith that hath saved them shall shake the Holy Heaven and the glorified Earth with the exulting shout: "Worthy the Lamb that was slain" thereon; "Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

Thus onward, through this Edenic state, enjoying the happiness, the glory and the bliss of this *Thousand Years!* beyond the capacity of the present man to conceive. In his assured candidacy, with every shred of his accountability left in the grave; with every possibility of future ill, evil or sin driven from his being, thoughts and future forever! Growing daily and hourly in knowledge under the loving tuition of the divine schoolmaster who will at the close of this millennium present us to His Father, "holy and unblamable and unreprovable in His sight." Onward through the age necessary to undo the effects of diso-

bedience and restore us to the exalted condition so often held to our view in the Book of God. His "sure mercies" shall be ours! Nothing shall mar our joy! Sin and sorrow and suffering shall be forgotten. Instead of gazing from the verge of the blest home, down into a sea of sulphurous flame, and listening to the wails and groans of agonizing torture and despair and remediless and eternal woe, we will, with one accord, lift up our hands and voices and bless Him who sitteth upon the throne for the sure and glorious hope of welcoming the glad return of all the nations of the dead to the acceptance and favor of their God! What a source of happiness! What a fountain of joy! What a crown of rejoicing! What an incentive, reader, to seek a part in such limitless love, and be of those who share it in the blissful Thousand Years!

That the All-Father in His omnipotence *designed in the beginning to make every living creature the recipient of all of happiness which his being, through all its exalted conditions, could hold, and that in the end no part of His supreme will shall be changed or frustrated, was the theme and inspiration of*

Prophecy! The heavenly theme of glorified spirits around the throne of such love and omnipotence! and will be the burden of the loud chorus chanted from the first consciousness of bliss in the new earth through the succeeding ages of eternity, and may be and and ought to be the theme of all, in this our Present!

> O glorious, all-absorbing theme!
> Song of the Universe—supreme!
> Theme of the Seraph Choir above,
> Almighty! Free! Eternal Love!

If the inducements held out in the gospel of Christ should seem to fail in bringing a soul to His feet in submission, that soul must indeed set a high value upon the treasures of earth. Or, perhaps, he purposes at some future day, when he has disposed of some of the business in hand, determining at all events to secure his eternal interests before his Present shall close. Or, he may have read or heard the specious dissertations of those who, in their unbelief, have thrown to the winds all ideas of accountability to any being greater than man, and are now ready to stand before vast audiences and direct their wit and sar-

casm against the almost universal convictions of mankind.

These leaves would say to the world that back in the past as far as sacred or profane history is able to reach, both have brought down to us the fact that the maker of the wonderful works we behold was the object of adoration among the nations of the earth, and they acknowledged their accountability to and their dependence on Him. The same history will prove, beyond a shadow of doubt, that all humanity have in one way or another confessed allegiance to what they conceived to be superior beings. The idea of accountability, dependence and worship *is the one grand fact of humanity* to all save a few, whose supposed superior intellect and perception prompt to declaim against them as visionary, unreal and beneath the dignity of supreme man.

For me, I believe that the confirmed unbeliever in our God, upon his accession to some condition which others would call a blessing—something over which no human control was apparent, like a life saved or a calamity averted, needs must offer to some unknown Providence the incense of his gratitude. Is

there a man who affects to doubt the existence of a being who is the Creator of earth's visible wonders and the arbiter of its destinies, who has no innate misgivings in reference to his views! Had the human race been as loudly called upon to accept the doctrines and examples of a widely known teacher, who advocated free action in ethics and free scope to the appetites and passions, who proclaimed that the natural bent and inclinations of mankind should be their sole guide and preceptor, and that there was no power greater than man to claim priority in our accountability or worship, would the world have bowed the knee to such a gospel? Would the world have kept his precepts and examples emblazoned in tradition and record? or, disgusted with its workings, turn in loathing and seek some higher system! France has been made the broad canvas on which such conditions were most elaborately pictured. But in the most thoughtless, the most volatile, and the most skeptical nation on earth, the consciousness of a far better pattern prevailed. "The fool hath said in his heart: there is no God." This text of Scripture stands proven beyond a possible con-

tradiction, for folly has never more fully exemplified herself than in the denial of a Supreme Being, or appeared in more idiotic features than in her effort to destroy our faith in the Christian religion.

If, therefore, it be the glitter of the tinsel of this present life, if it be the unworthy wish to defer your submission, or if you have followed the counsels of infidelity and are tempted to deny the Lord that bought you : I ask you in the name of Him who has breathed the whispers of an unsatisfied conscience in your ears to cast away these and all other causes, and bury yourselves deep among the words of life, and seek there for a doctrine, a hope and a surety which will bring you to the safest and best position in which man ever stood.

It is not that your rebellion, your persistence in sin or even your denial of His existence can affect Him. No, He desires your immediate and total surrender in order that *you* may be secure from the evil to come, and that you may show to others the withered arm that was restored, the eyes that now see, and the ears that now can hear. He does

not demand of you unconditional surrender. No, faith in His promises and confidence in His power is all He asks of you. Since the foundation of the world the stipulations of your surrender have been drawn ; and what beneficent, what loving, what lasting, what divine conditions on the part of a conqueror !

Jesus Christ is in NO SENSE YOUR ENEMY ! All of hostility is in YOUR RANKS ! Pontius Pilate, in mistaken appreciation of his prisoner, deemed His aspiration to sovereignty, in the face of the majesty of Rome, as unworthy of his notice. But the Sword of the Spirit pierced the heart of Rome in his own generation. The Kingdom of the Crucified was "not of this world !"

How more than feeble and foolish, then, our resistance to Divine Power ! How weak and insignificant in the Divine Mind are our hostilities ! And how utterly wrong are we in our conceptions of this warfare.

No, our Savior is in *no sense* our enemy. His is the "Sword of the Spirit," and its thrusts are not "against flesh and blood, but against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wicked-

ness in high places!" His war is waged, not against the creature of His care, His protection, and the object of His infinite love, but against disobedience and sin and all the death-producing causes inherent since the fall. And His greatest enemy—and, if we but realized it, *our* greatest enemy—the common enemy—"*The last enemy that shall be destroyed*, which is *Death!*"

Your duty to yourselves and to your fellow-man is to cast down the weapons of your rebellion where you stand and walk boldly within the lines of the King of Kings, and render service in a better cause. And though you fall, you will not be utterly cast down, for He "will raise you up at the last day." Yes, on the Millennial Parade ground will stand all who were ever enrolled in the Holy Army of God, our warfare over, peace proclaimed and assured, and a "Thousand Years" given in which to celebrate our victory.

THE HOLY CITY.

Man, from the day he was made in the image and likeness of his Creator was endowed with a love of the beautiful. Admiration for the starry host of Heaven has been to him a source of blessing, and only ceased as such when he forgot the Creator and worshipped His works. The attractive pageantry that was ever the accompaniment of idolatry held a powerful influence over the minds of even the earlier worshipers of God. The children of Israel gloried more in the splendors of the Mosaic tabernacle, and in the tangible magnificence of King Solomon's temple, and the glories of his reign, and in the pomp and pageantry of the dominion of the Messiah as pictured by the prophets, than in all the wonderful and miraculous dispensations manifested in God's dealings with them. The love of beauty, splendor, grandeur and magnificence is continued to mankind with just rules for pointing out its laudable uses and preventing its excesses and abuses. The natural effect of the

Creator's manifold works is beauty and splendor. The idea of beauty and magnificence is indeed inseparable from his system of arrangement. A glorious sunrise, the sun-kissed clouds in ether space, a gorgeous sunset with His Bow of Promise painted on the eastern cloud, the silver-faced moon sailing in serene loveliness, beautifying sublime night and carrying in its path the hope of a coming morrow —like the christian's hope sown with his natural body; and hand in hand—viewing in loveliness, the fair flowers and the "human face divine." All of these, and all of beauty in the works of Nature's God may profitably be enjoyed, but *never worshiped.* But glittering baubles and costly decorations of human art among the inventions man "hath sought out," he that hath "put on Christ" may not tolerate; for we may not wrest the money for their purchase from the *needs of the* poor! Believing, therefore, that love and appreciation of the beautiful was designed by the Creator as a source of pleasure, through which the mind may be lifted to higher aspirations and fixed upon "treasures in Heaven," imperishable and priceless; we may justly maintain

that, in conjunction with Bible promises, beauty and grandeur, magnificence and glory will be large factors in Eternal Life.

When the age set apart for the restoration of the obedient in Christ to a condition in which "the gift of God—Eternal Life" may be bestowed, when prepared to look upon the effulgence of Eternity. When the "Thousand Years are expired, the Holy City New Jerusalem" will "come down from God out of Heaven prepared"—and for want of a more fitting similitude in which to express his idea of the perfection of beauty the Revelator finishes his description with what seemed to his mind most beautiful: "a Bride adorned for her husband!"

And this arrival of God's Jerusalem opens a new era in the life of the children of men, and seals up Time, and reveals Eternity!

ETERNITY.

The Bible establishes beyond contradiction the fact that the conditions of life lie in obedience to the will of God. Disobedience of His commands and the sum of those conditions may be found in the order following:

1st. "But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."

2d. An unreserved faith in God's promise to Abraham.

3d. Laws and observances belonging to the Mosaic dispensation, terminating at—and its moral reaching into—

4th. The life, precepts, death and gospel of Jesus Christ.

We have seen that the infraction of the first involved the dispensations of the succeeding ones; and we find all the obedient of every age of the earthly life enjoying the bliss of the millennial era.

Whatever may be the number of those who

will seek and find safety in the blood of the only effective sacrifice before the first resurrection, there must needs be more who have died, and will yet die out of Christ. The great multitudes of the heathen who flourished in the light of science and the arts, the countless masses of ignorant idolators whose climate, home and sustenance were almost an Eden; who never knew the will of God; and who ever have been, and are yet to be "beaten with few stripes," will all—*all—every one!* hear the trumpet's call, and stand upon their feet in sight of the glories of the Celestial City.

At that time will the prophet Ezekiel behold the realization of his vision in the "valley of dry bones," when he sees "the whole house of Israel" come forth out of their graves.

Let us in imagination resolve ourselves into spectators of the sublime scenes to be here presented. Who are these millions coming up from beneath our feet? and those rushing from North, South, East and West, and forming line in solid cordon around the beloved city, holding in their grasp the weapons of rebellion, while their leader in form of a monster incites them to attack the camp of the saints, with a

devil's faith of conquest? And while we cast our eyes to the brilliant walls and the massive foundations, we behold no preparations for defence; no guard at the gates of the beleaguered city, no archers upon its walls; but instead the perfect serenity and confidence of the besieged. In utter astonishment we ask, "What shall be the end of these things?" A shining angel is standing at our side; and as we cover our eyes with our hands to shut out the blinding radiance, he speaks: "These are the 'rest of the dead.' These are they who had no 'part in the first resurrection.' Here on this broad plain, as far as the eye can reach, are arrayed in the rebellion in which they lived and died, the unsaved! Every son and daughter of Adam, who, in their lifetime, sought not by obedience and faith in Christ the gifts of glory and gladness enjoyed by those in yonder blessed city are here before you! 'Stand still, and see the salvation of God!' Cast away all your human theologies! Throw to the winds all the teachings and doctrines and sectarian dogmas that you have held so dear, for they are no more in the mind of our

sovereign than the 'small dust of the balance.' Of so little consequence did He ever esteem them that he has never enumerated and condemned them. Obedience in *one act* of Adam, faith in the covenant with Abraham, a careful following of rules and observances in the law of the Mosaic dispensation, and Jesus 'Christ and Him crucified' were all in each of their prevailing ages that was enjoined upon you. He never issued a command, or offered a precept to men, that could only be comprehended by Infinite mind. He never desired you to search out the hidden purposes that belong to God alone. The Holy Spirit never presided at, directed, influenced, or applauded in the disputations and wranglings of human minds over human theologies! The rites and ceremonies belonging to ancient Hebrew worship avail nothing. How more than valueless, then, the sectarian conclusions that clustered around the hope in the Christ of God!

"But you builded upon 'the sure foundation,' and I remember well the demonstrations of 'joy in heaven' at your repentance. Behold that vast concourse! the far greater part of the accumulation of the ages! Behold as

contrast *the saved* in yonder shining city! These all died in faith and have received the promise! Those lived out their days in rebellion against God, and in the service of the hideous monster who has marshalled them in battle array against 'the Lord of Hosts!' But this, his last deception, is the final act of his life! How could you ever have supposed that yonder wretch, who bears the revolting impress of brute, whose only attributes are cunning, deceit and falsehood, whom John on Patmos saw in vision, and you now behold in reality as the incarnate spirit of evil, could, by his machinations, win from the Omnipotent Maker of all these worlds, the ruler of their harmonious circuits through boundless immensity, and the safe keeper of the destinies of their peoples, so great, or *any* proportion of the offspring of His creation, the children of His care, and the objects of His infinite love. Did the Bible teach you that God ever commissioned that mass of concentrated sin to be the custodian of the sinners among mankind? Had you sought out and accepted the sure testimonies recorded in Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Nehe-

miah, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, as prophets of the Lord, and Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, Paul's two letters to the Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, second Thessalonians, first and second Timothy, Hebrews, first and second Peter, John, Jude and Revelation, as apostles of the gospel of Jesus Christ, your confidence in the power and intention of God to save would have been greater and your hope in Christ brighter."

I approach this part of our subject with a full realization of the fact that the involved questions have been treated by learned fathers of the olden times, and by the most profound theologians of a later day ; by men deeply versed in ancient languages, and possessing all the advantages of access to early history, and also to the traditions of the children of Israel. But we must not lose sight of the way of truth by taking for our starting point the errors apparent in their doctrines of the innate immortality of the human soul, and the eternal punishment of the wicked in the tortures of hell fire.

The Pharisees and Sadducees, both, concocted a leaven of heresy, directly and vastly at variance with the character and attributes of God and their own Scriptures, as set forth by the mouth of His prophets. We will "beware" of their leaven in this respect as also in that of refusing to accept the Prince of Life in his humiliation, a most poisonous ingredient in their "old leaven," and we will glory in that "leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till *the* WHOLE WAS LEAVENED!!"

The heresies of the doctrines of the immortality of the human soul, and the destruction or endless torture of the far greater part of mankind, were the results of misconstruction of the Bible account of the creation of man, and arbitrary expositions of the types and shadows in the promise given to Abraham, and perverse and wicked deductions from the great themes of prophecy relating to the coming and kingdom of the Messiah, and are, as we have abundantly seen, unwarranted—and not only that—but absolutely disproved by the word of God. If the countless number whom we have represented as standing before

the bar of infinite justice have been joined by deathless entities—then, indeed, is their eternity of existence assured.

Then, without having tasted of the fruit of the tree of life they will "live forever." And in point of duration of existence, the dwellers in "the City of God" who have partaken of the tree and the unsaved are alike.

The doctrine of an endless entity in man detracts from God's wise purpose in the tree of life, and from the grandest hope set forth in the resurrection of the dead!

Access to the tree of life never was—and never will be—granted to a child of man under conditions of disobedience. It was to prevent the possibility of man's agency from working his remediless ruin that the powers of heaven became alert with purpose to prevent his approach, and that it was transplanted in the paradise of God. The children of the kingdom have partaken, and the life belonging to eternity is theirs.

A dispensation differing in detail, but how much in results we may not venture to say. For the Tree of Life flourishes and yields its abundant burden in the middle of the streets

and on both banks of the life-giving river in swift succession of fruitage. "The leaves of the tree were for the Healing of the Nations!"

What a bountiful provision! And for what purpose is it? The saved in the Holy City secured access to the Tree of Life as their "Right!" There is no malady necessitating cure! "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." But the trees still flourish, and still the crystal river flows on, *boundless*, *free*, *exhaustless all!* And again we ask, for what purpose?

Here is a good place to pause in contemplation of the mightiest consideration belonging to mankind. Here before us stand arrayed and arraigned, by far the greater human product of the ages. All who since creation have died in wickedness. Raised from their graves, from the sea, and brought from far lands whither they were driven, to render their account of deeds done in the body, and to submit to the judgment and sentence of outraged *justice and mercy and love.* The hypocritical scribe and Pharisee judged and condemned them long ago. Professed followers of the loving Christ have judged and pro-

nounced sentence of eternal torture upon them long before the measure of their sins was full. And there is little grounds for doubt that they, according to their theological educations, have judged and condemned themselves. But who made them judges over this vast assemblage? It is well that God is our judge! Represented as He has been as the impersonation of wrath and cruel vindictiveness, I would rather fall into His hand than theirs! I would rather be judged by Him than by the combined philanthropy of this world! Yes, *the Will for our happiness is His, and the Power is His!* But let us suppose in regard of this vast consideration, that the Patriarchs and Prophets, the Apostles and early Christians are commissioned to pass judgment and sentence upon this vast mass of capabilities of joy or pain, what would be the fiat? Would it be like this? "Children of disobedience, the hour has come when self-condemned you stand face to face with outraged mercy, love and justice. You have persistently refused the constant calls of the Spirit of Truth, and have followed the counsels of yonder loathsome monster. You have spent your earthly life in

rebellion and sin. You have forfeited all right to immortality or its blessings. You have, in common with all flesh, paid the penalty of sin in Adam. Up to this awful moment the blood of Christ has been to you of no avail. That you may the more clearly behold the fruits of your wickedness, God has placed before your eyes in vivid and horrid impersonations, the aggregate of your unholy appetites, passions, rebellion and ingratitude, and there remains for you only 'a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which, *glory to God*, SHALL DEVOUR THE ADVERSARIES! The sentence, therefore, is that the god whom ye served, who is now endeavoring to incite you to attempt the crowning act of your wickedness, together with all the lesser spirits of evil, shall be destroyed out of the universe of God by the whelming vengeance which He bears toward sin, and that yourselves in this destruction shall be saved 'as by fire.' And your sentence further is, that when your hope of conquering Omnipotence and the Camp of the Saints is riven from you, you look on Him whom you have pierced, bow the knee in eternal subjection and confess

that our God is King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

I cannot depict the abhorrent hideousness of incarnated sin ; that monster of horror that has been presented in prophetic vision ; that has been pointed out and cursed in the volume of inspiration ; and was first personated in the specious plea and the temptation going on in the breast of Eve at the time of the fall ; but if we could invest with apparent form all our own sins, I know that the spectacle would appal us.

Will it not interest you to seek out all these personations and incarnated imagery in the Bible, and satisfy yourselves as to what is represented by them. Seek out, also, how many times the fires that are mentioned—and have been by certain theologists construed to mean God's wrathful punishment of the damned of Eternity ; signify, when taken in the light of Divine Revelation, the Love and Zeal of our Creator in the salvation of ALL ! Learn there also how much of the smoke and the fire and the brimstone are prophetic of the use of gunpowder in war. John, by one of the beasts in his vision, pictures a cannon with astonishing fidelity : Rev. 9: 17, 18, 19.

When He, who is now our advocate at the right hand of His Father, was nailed to the cruel cross and endured agonies that have drawn rivers of tears from the eyes of the pitying children of earth, looked toward His home in Heaven and implored in earnest accents for the forgiveness of His murderers; was it for those who were immediately concerned in His crucifixion, or the whole house of Israel, or, was it *all* for whom He died that He prayed? And did that prayer fall short of the ear of Him to Whom the prayer was addressed? And did He in those last moments prefer a request that He knew would not be answered? Or is there hope in that petition? and will not our High Priest in the awful day of judgment, take up the burden of that prayer, and in the Holy office of that eternal Priesthood, present His wounds, identifying the accepted sacrifice, and claiming the pardon of *every one* at that tribunal bar? For, the mission of Jesus Christ in His death—whatever may be the conditions of His Priesthood as regards other worlds—was to abolish death in this; and to restore man in his lost estate, to the love and favor of his God. I can find no period when this vast

assemblage as it stands awaiting judgment, could have changed its opinions as regards eschatology; and think therefore that they still hold the varied convictions of their earthly lives; and that they are looking for such condemnation as their earthly education has inculcated. The idolatrous nations will confess —"truly ours were no gods," and will—at once bow the knee in suppliance and worship.

We may not propose to suggest the duration of their continuance under these conditions, and cannot state the amount of suffering they may endure.

Permit us to use a little human reasoning, claiming in the mean time however, no direct support from Revelation except as it is in accordance with what is understood of the character and attributes of God. At the coming of Christ when the second stage of the Christian's life begins, all who were left in their graves were joined by all the living wicked; thus fulfilling upon all the race the curse in Adam—"as in Adam all die." Now in the first resurrection a part of that all were "made alive"; and in them, and to them the promise was fulfilled. If then, there was in the mind

of God no loving purpose of future good to "the rest of the dead," why then were they in Christ made alive? and for what purpose? when they had finished their rebellious career and were removed from all possibility of further sin; except that they, by being raised to an immortal state of existence, might live on in eternity's weary cycles in hopeless and unpitied torture; no bounded duration however far set in the future, being long enough in which the vengeance of Him who—without their desire or consent—created them. Here before us are the dire results of "teaching for doctrine the commandments of men!"

Witness the effects of pharasaic transmutation of the Word of God as delivered to His prophets, into monstrous heresies; in whose rabbinic counsels Satan was arbiter. Here are visible the fruits of disobedience. Here is the harvest of the willful idolatry of the children of Jacob, and the outcome of their theologies. Here those who treasured the sophistries of skeptics. Here all who gave loose reign to their passions and were hurried to their ruin. Here those whom Satan under the name of *rum* has brutalized, maddened and

murdered. Here are the heathen who were partakers in the curse of Adam, but who never knew the true cause of their sufferings and death, nor the way of escape. With what loathing and horror will they gaze upon the hideous phantoms resolved into living form, as the dire imagery of Sin. The goddess of Fashion whose labyrinthian garments are bedecked and bejeweled with the tinsel and baubles of the old life is revolting to their sense, and the gold and diamonds and pearls have lost their sheen.

The "fool," who "hath said in his heart there is no God," recoils from the repulsive figure standing before him with a Bible under his feet.

That fiend of indescribable hideousness who tauntingly offers the goblet, is met with agonizing groans and bitter wails of recollection. At the pompous steps of the demon, Pride, his votaries are humbled, and cast their eyes in abasement to the ground.

And behold, "the Judge of all the earth," *who* WILL "DO RIGHT," comes forth and is enthroned in awful majesty within this terror-stricken circle, from whom at one glance

arises a wild wail of utter despair: O, ye towering mountains, ye mighty rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sitteth upon the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Whether an hour or an age shall be employed in the final settlement of the affairs of the children of men, we may not venture to say, for this period belongs to "the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power;" but this, I think, we may safely declare: That it is the period involving the "work" that should be "finished and cut short in righteousness," for "a short work will the Lord make upon the earth."

The wicked, by refusing the overtures of God's love, have missed the stage in His economy of preparation for eternal life, and the strong measures found in the Scriptures are doubtless necessary for their "return." One view of the Holy City and the glory that illumines it, and the destruction of that "old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan," the deceiver of the whole world, and their rebellion gives place to despair, *and is gone* with every-

thing that can "separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And see! *The sceptre is lowered and lovingly extended, and the lifted up* WILL DRAW ALL MEN UNTO HIM!" And they shall take up the song of rejoicing and shall set their faces toward the shining city, "and all nations shall flow unto it." What is the theme of their song? "Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob, and He will *teach us* of His ways, and we will walk in His paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not." All we, out of our own mouths, stood condemned, and out of His abundant purposes and love hath He pardoned our iniquities, "*and there shall be no more curse!*"

The times and seasons which the Father hath put in His own power are fulfilled, for times and seasons are no more. God's number is full, and the mighty mission of Christ is fulfilled, for He came to seek and to save that which was lost! *and a full and entire*

success has crowned His Perfect Work! Not one vestige of evil remains in this new state, and no remembrance of evil comes back to us from the old.

The whole grand scheme and design of God in our creation, and the way-marks placed along our history from the hour when the spirit world glorified the Omnipotent Maker over the prospect of countless millions of living, beautiful and happy intelligences who should wear their form and be partakers of their eternal joy, down to the day when His purposes are completed, are easily traceable through the Scriptures, in spite of perverse rabbinical deductions and arbitrary misinterpretations, or the debris of traditional and legendary rubbish thrown by irresponsible and truthless manufacturers of religious monstrosities, or by the pride of scholastic arrogance, over the clear pages of Revelation. Yes! plainly and in bright relief stand out the few, but *all* the requirements and conditions of the Father's "will concerning us." If we obey, emotions of the highest type of gratitude become ours, and the highest Hope becomes our sure anchor in our Present, and when revivified

in the second stage of our existence and secure from sin, from sorrow, from pain and death, it will be ours to spend a thousand years in happy innocence and childlike purity as our preparation for entering on the next stage of a higher life.

What will be the conditions of those future stages or cycles we are unable to conceive, but let us, with our best interests in view, strive by obedience to prove them. An infinite life of progress, of knowledge and of joy, however, are certain. Here the geologist may seek and find unfailing data ; may trace the sure indices of his beloved science back until he lose himself in the awful eternity of the mighty past. Here the rapt astronomer, with eye unaided by human artifice, may comprehend the almighty science that holds those myriads of worlds in their prescribed orbits and bounds. Here he may count them until figures fail to express their number. Here on spirit wing he may visit the far-off homes of unknown beings until he finds that his adventurous pinions could *never reach* the confines of the works of God, and find all lighted and cheered by the smile and LOVE of the omni-

present. Then swiftly back to the white throne, and in raptures born of infinite surroundings, declare: O, Savior of all, thou didst say well that in thy Father's house were many mansions!

And so shall the astronomer and the geologist, and all seekers after knowledge, ascribe glory and honor, and majesty and power unto Him who made all creatures for His own loving pleasure and purpose, and for their own unconfined enjoyment. Then away—perhaps to the dark caverns of unformed and chaotic worlds, where a lingering recollection of a former dogma might prompt them to seek the flaming abode of the children of wrath, but where the attendant angel whispers them with an assuring smile, "*There is no more curse!*" And so on, on, through the ceaseless ages of man's future, ever learning and never grasping all. Never reaching the climax of perfect and all-comprehending eternal wisdom and limitless LOVE.

CONCLUSION.

It has not been the intention of the writer solely to call up the conflicting questions of belief held by sectarian churches and taught by them as rules of faith to their members, with the purpose of assailing them as heretical, or to deprecate their place in Christian creeds, for he knows well, and has already conceded, that millions have been born into that kingdom which is the type of the "kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ," and that theirs is the surety of an abundant entrance into that triumphant church, the gathering in one of the children of God. He does not believe that they are of any importance as rules of faith, and is of opinion that, had the Divine Being considered them as savingly necessary, no more grounds for disputation would have been found, than in the gospel of Salvation through faith in the Promise to Abraham, and that of obedience in Jesus Christ; and that there would never have been such conflicting renderings, such direct contradic-

tions, such angry schisms and such irreparable losses of love and unity in the Christian Church. It has ever seemed that the religious priesthood were unsatisfied with the seemingly small volume of the legal text contained in the Word of God; and that priest and rabbin and scribe and lawyer deemed it necessary to build around the plain structure until the "Law and the Prophets" were overwhelmed. I would be glad, could I persuade all who have not done so, to procure and read the Book of Enoch and whatever they can find of ancient religious tradition and legend, as translated from the Talmud and other Jewish and Ishmaelitish absurdities. I ask you to endure the disgust which will *be sure* to attend while you read, until you clearly perceive Christ's just reasons for His condemnation of "vain traditions" and "the commandments of men;" and until you are ready to discard all down to the two commandments whereon "hang all the Law and the Prophets."

For me, I fully believe that the doctrine of unconditional and component immortality, while it feeds the pride of being in man, incorporates itself into his creed and is fruitful in

yielding errors which this age ought to be able to reject, is the parent of that sum of all fearful errors, the eternal punishment of the larger portion of mankind.

There are many now living who can well remember the time when the doctrine of never ending suffering by fire was believed to have been unmistakably taught in the Bible as the wages of final impenitence. And so believing, it became necessary to subordinate their own judgment and confess the equality of the punishment with the offence. This, in later years, has come to be much too strong a doctrine, and the innate humanity of man has revolted against the cruel situation, and less of the terrors of the Lord have been preached. There is a manifest denial of that faith in the silence of many gospel ministers and evangelists on that subject; and you are earnestly asked—should you not conceive the sentence of the final Judge to be sufficiently severe to charge the discrepancy to ALMIGHTY LOVE.

This belief is, also, very evidently losing ground among those who have made no experience in religious matters, and if they, with professed Christians would "search the Scrip-

tures" with the interest such a subject ought to inspire, it would become easily apparent that "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," is, as far as the final welfare of mankind is concerned, the paramount concern of the children of men. And further; that as in St. Paul's opinion, Jesus Christ and Him crucified was all he determined to know, and that it was all-sufficient for theology and a glorious abundance for salvation!

It has not been the design to place these pages before the reader in any other light than as way marks to lead him to the truth as pointed out in the sacred volume. There are only keynotes sounded to each principal feature of the work; for I believe that "search the Scriptures" is the *strongest influence of the Holy Spirit.* And however acceptable as evidence the few arguments adduced may be to me, I have a firm faith that if men will obey the sweet influences of that persistent, loving spirit, and call around them the long list of true witnesses, and listen to their "sure testimonies" with minds divested of traditions and sectarian theologies, a "day-star will arise in their hearts," light ineffable will chase

the darkness of doubt from the soul, the way to the foot of the Cross will be found, apathy and unconcern dispelled, an eager interest awakened, an entire surrender made and the grand object in man's creation accomplished, and his eternal happiness secured.

It is not the design of these leaves to prove one by one the points they offer for consideration; but to induce men to *read for themselves;* to compare prophecy with prophecy and spiritual things with spiritual, and to follow the line of man's destiny through the Word of God. And if, with the blessing of the Divine Author of that Word, some may be induced to search the Scriptures through the instrumentality of this humble but earnest appeal, the fervent prayer of the writer will be answered, and bright will be his crown of rejoicing, and limitless the joy of the seeker.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 041 210 020 7